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LALLIE CHARLES.

THE DUCHESS OF SUTHERLAND.

Titchfield Road, N.W.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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ENGLISH CIDER.

ONE of the most useful pamphlets issued by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries is the report which Mr. F. J. Lloyd has drawn up on cider-making. For some time past careful investigations have been made under the auspices of the Bath and West of England Society, and with the help of Mr. Neville Grenville of Butleigh Court, Glastonbury. The Board of Agriculture, with unaccustomed generosity, gave £100 a year to the furtherance of the research. The condition in which Mr. Lloyd found the trade at the beginning was deplorable. Uniformity here, as elsewhere, is the demand of those who sell the article, and it may be assumed that a really large business will not be done till one bottle of a manufacturer's cider is as like another as one bottle of Bass resembles its neighbour. What Mr. Lloyd found was that not only did the cider of one district differ from that of another, and the produce of one farm differ from that of the next holding, but it was difficult to find two or three barrels in the same cider-house which were alike. This discrepancy could not be got over by the panacea usually recommended, which is that of cleanliness, although absolute cleanliness is as essential to the production of good cider as it is to the production of good butter. As Mr. Lloyd points out, it is only an elementary virtue, very necessary in handling the juice, storing and purifying it, but that is only the beginning of the way to make good cider. There are three great factors on which the result depends, of which the first is the composition of the apples and the juice obtained from them; the second, the methods and apparatus used in the manufacture; and the third, the control of the fermentation.

Taking these in their order, the old fallacy in regard to apples was that any refuse was good enough for cider-making.

In Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, and Worcestershire apple trees of very indifferent varieties grow in the hedgerows, and very pleasant they are when gay with the blossoms of spring. Not so long ago these supplied the fruit for many presses, and even to-day the farmer who makes his own cider continues to use the wayside apple. But if cider is to be made a commercial product, the manufacturer cannot afford to do this any longer. He must have good and ripe apples, and he must know what to look for in them. The most important constituent is sugar, and the second is the acidity of the juice, which varies according to the kind of apple used. Tannin is the third element of importance. It has the property of precipitating albumen, and so helps to clear the juice. Into Mr. Lloyd's analyses of apple juice and cider it is not necessary to go at present, as they deal chiefly with his method of experimentation. Nor, again, do we need to follow him through his account of the seasons from 1893 to 1902, the years during which these investigations were carried on. His conclusion, however, may be stated. It is that the composition of the apple is greatly affected by the season, though how or why he is unable to say. Again, the composition of the juice varies according to the climate. An important point is the influence of locality on apples, which he proves by a comparison of those grown at Butleigh with those that were procured from East Lambrook, a circumstance which justifies the existence of cider districts, since it makes it both possible and probable that the soil and climate in certain parts of England are more favourable to the production of cider apples than others. A practical question for the owners of orchards regards the most suitable variety of apple to grow, and experiments were conducted with a special view to finding this out. Mr. Lloyd does not specifically say which is the best, but he mentions those cultivated each season, with the results obtained from them. Curiously enough, many unnamed varieties that were sent in to be made into cider proved to be excellent.

After this there follow some very practical directions about the treatment of apples. He thinks that they ought to be picked before they become quite ripe, and they should be stored away to ripen. The storing-room ought to be a dry, well-ventilated loft, the floor of which is divided into bins, or if this convenience is not at hand, hurdle stores may be used, of which an illustration is given. The hurdles are the same as those used at lambing-time, and the experiments made in the way of keeping apples in them are described as being most satisfactory. Care should be taken, however, to protect the apples from rain. In making the beverage, temperature should be very much taken into account. "The cooler the season the better the make," says Mr. Lloyd, hence it is well to delay it as long as possible. On the Continent it is customary to wash the apples before they are ground, but this is not usual in England. Of the several mills now in use Mr. Lloyd makes some trenchant criticisms. The old stone mill crushes the apples thoroughly, but it is slow and dirty. The kind of mill made of two iron rollers fitting into each other does not separate the cells of the apples sufficiently. The mill recommended is one called the "Scratcher." "It is best for this reason, that it disintegrates the apple cell from cell." Most English mills crush the pips, but foreign makers do not do so, and have their mills made so as not to crush them. Many experiments were tried for the purpose of ascertaining the exact effect of crushed pips on cider, and the result was that "we now lay it down as one of the rules at Butleigh that the pips must not be crushed." At first they used the old-fashioned press, but it required a great deal of manual labour, and, therefore, was not satisfactory. Eventually the Quadruple Gear Hand Press was substituted for it. In the expressed juice of the apple several kinds of yeast are present, and if left to themselves these would soon begin the process of fermentation which converts the sugar into alcohol. It was an important point therefore to decide whether it was best to leave the natural ferments to work as they did in the old way or to control the process. Needless to say, it was the latter method that was found the more satisfactory. We have run over the pamphlet in very wide terms. It was not our intention at all to deduce from it the principles of cider-making, or to write a short essay that would enable anyone to go and take up this trade. Our purpose was rather to draw attention to the pamphlet, which gives such full, sound, and practical information that it should enable any farmer to make cider of a very high quality. Needless to say, our sympathies are entirely with those who would develop a taste for this liquid, which has many advantages over the more alcoholic beverages that continue in favour.

Our Portrait Illustration.

A PORTRAIT of the Duchess of Sutherland forms our frontispiece this week. The Duchess of Sutherland is the eldest daughter of the fourth Earl of Rosslyn, and was married in 1884.



IF there is any man of the present day entitled to the name of a great aristocrat, it is certainly the Duke of Devonshire, and the reception accorded to King Edward VII., Queen Alexandra, and Princess Victoria at Chatsworth on Monday was worthy of the traditions of a great English noble. Whatever effect could be obtained by art or trouble was brought into being, and, what is of more consequence, the company chosen to meet the Royal guests was the *élite* of England, considered not only from a social, but from an intellectual point of view. The King is staying at Chatsworth during the whole of the present week, and the festivities arranged are on a scale befitting his magnificent welcome to this celebrated country house, which was built at the end of the seventeenth century by the first Duke of Devonshire. No family in England has maintained its individual characteristics to a greater extent than that which he founded, and loyalty and prudence and wisdom distinguish the latest as they did the first of the name.

The death-roll of the past year is one of the longest which we remember, and includes more than an average number of illustrious names. In the peerage the greatest losses among public men were those of the Marquess of Salisbury and the Duke of Richmond, while in Lord Stanley of Alderley, the Dowager Marchioness of Ormonde, and Countess Spencer there passed away striking and well-known figures. Of baronets the best known were Sir Frederick Bramwell, Sir George Stokes, and Sir Blundell Maple, while among knights have to be numbered Sir Michael Herbert, Sir Hector MacDonald, and Sir John Robinson. The House of Commons has lost several of its most familiar figures, among whom may be mentioned Mr. R. W. Hanbury, the late Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Jasper More, Ludlow, Mr. Orr-Ewing, Ayr, and Sir William Allan, Gateshead. Men of letters have suffered as severely as politicians, among the dead being numbered Herbert Spencer, J. H. Short-house, W. E. H. Lecky, and last, but not least, W. E. Henley. It is a list to make the world look poorer in 1904.

The issues at stake between Japan and Russia have gradually been emerging from the cloud of diplomatic dust in which they were at first concealed, and they give an impression of great reasonableness on the part of the younger nation. Practically, what the Japs claim is non-intervention on the part of Russia in the affairs either of Manchuria or Corea. The latter part of their demand is really essential to their security as a nation, and if they were not to fight for it they might as well give up altogether. The former is only keeping Russia to her frequently-made professions of unselfishness in regard to Manchuria. But, while the demands of Japan are clear, definite, and precise, the Government of St. Petersburg is adopting a policy of evasion and procrastination, with an evident view to putting off the declaration of hostilities till the ports are free from ice. Under these circumstances it can excite no surprise that Japan does not care to stand still and wait for the coming blow.

A factor that should not be left out of the reckoning in estimating the possibilities of the situation that has arisen between Russia and Japan is the attitude of the Czar. Only five years ago he electrified Europe by his proposal to "put an end to the incessant armaments, and to discover some means of averting the calamities which are threatening the whole world." The question asked at the time was whether the Czar was acting on his own initiative or as the mouthpiece of Minister or party. If his own personal influence was really exerted to the extent of calling together the Conference at the Hague, it is only reasonable to expect that the same influence will now be exerted in favour of making peace with Japan, even at the last hour. The point in dispute is one just as suitable for arbitration as any other in the great controversies which have led to war in the past, and Russia has a splendid opportunity of performing an act of self-sacrifice and setting an example to the rest of the world.

If it should, unhappily, be destined that we are to witness a war between Russia and Japan, one of the spectacles of most intense interest in the struggle will be the manner in which the Japanese sailors will acquit themselves in the management of that complexity of machinery which we now call a man-of-war. It is a complexity that grows greater with every successive improvement in the art of gunnery and marine steam engines. The parts of the different mechanisms are so many, that most civilised nations may reckon themselves fortunate indeed if among all their ships they have one man in each who understands thoroughly all that pertains to his own department. Assuming this to be the case, it is evident that in the many chances of mishap in warfare it is only too likely that the man who alone understands a particular part of the mechanism may be disabled; and, should any difficulty at all occur in his department while he is unable to attend to it, trouble and, perhaps, disaster are the inevitable results. Experts who know something of the naval services of the two rival countries are of the opinion that in this respect Japan is far better provided than her great opponent in the Far East, her gunners and engineers having shown all that quickness and adaptability in taking up the parts of a new rôle that has been a constant characteristic of the nation.

That the rôle of Japan as a maritime Power is a new one is brought strongly to our notice by recalling the quite well-authenticated story of the first adventure of the first Japanese ironclad. She was built in England. While she was building her crew also were in England practising, in other ironclads, how to drive her. When she was finished the Japanese seamen took possession of her, bravely maintaining that they were fully equal to the task of starting her. And that, to be sure, they were, for she steamed out finely. The trouble only began when she came back to port again. Then, when they wanted to slow her down and stop her, they were unable to do so. They had to put her out to sea again and go on steaming her about till her fires went out, her engines stopped for want of steam, and she could be towed in. From this to having the best mentally-equipped crews perhaps of any nation seems a long step, but it has been a very rapid one.

THE COUNTRY DANCE.

There was never a sound of cab or car,
We were far from the lighted street;
But over the barn one burning star
Looked down on our dancing feet.
We had only the moan o' the mill stream
For the dull roar o' town,
But we hung our holly across the beam,
And danced the spiders down.
There was no flashing of gold and pearl,
No gleaming of silk and jet,
But here and there was a brown-faced girl
That my feet keep step to yet;
For a breast may swell to a lightsome laugh,
Though it hides in a humble gown.
So we danced away in the dust and chaff,
And rattled the spiders down.
No white hands conjured from Broadwood keys
Dream-wonder of waltz and reel;
But we threaded the barn like living bees
To the fiddle's night-long squeal.
And up the middle and down the sides,
With our hands in hands of brown,
We danced with our dancing hearts for guides,
And dusted the spiders down.
Dames, at your dances along Park Lane!
Men, that are sick of it all!
Light hearts were the links in our Grand Chain
When love led off at the Ball.
Your hansoms dash through the waves of light,
But nowhere in London Town
Will you find me the joy of a winter night
When we dusted the spiders down.

WILL H. OGILVIE.

It is earnestly to be hoped that one effect of the terrible fire at the Iroquois Theatre, Chicago, will be to ensure the taking of such precautions in all other theatres as to reduce the possibility of its repetition to a minimum. If there is any truth in the serious allegations made against the management and others, those who are to blame should be severely dealt with; and the fact that the fireproof curtain was no better than an ordinary drop-curtain points to very great carelessness somewhere. In the meantime, every effort is being made to get to the root of the matter. The Mayor, Mr. Harrison, has taken drastic measures in regard to the other theatres, and has ordered them all to be closed. It is stated that the inspectors discovered that very few of them have asbestos curtains, and that many of the other regulations for the prevention of accidents have not

been complied with. It is expected that the officials of the company owning the theatre will be prosecuted as well as the managers. The Kaiser, with characteristic energy, on finding that the opera house at Berlin was not safe, commanded it to be shut.

It has now been definitely ascertained that the number of lives lost in the fire was 587, and ten of the bodies are still unidentified. On Saturday 200 of the victims were buried. Every shop in the city was closed throughout the day, and services were held in all the churches, the bells being tolled from twelve o'clock till two. It was pathetic to see that more than half the hearses were white, signifying that the bodies were those of children, and as the processions passed along the streets many stood bareheaded, while in some instances the people sang "Lead, kindly Light," surely a most striking contrast to the gay and lively ditty that a music hall artist was singing when the fire broke out.

The Archbishop of Canterbury's New Year message is one that all the inhabitants of this country may take to heart, regardless of the religion they profess. His chief warning is directed against the weakness of listlessness. A certain fatalism is one of the characteristics of our time. Sometimes there is a kind of nobility attaching to the attitude, as in the case of Edward Fitzgerald, who in excuse for doing so little, or what he conceived to be so little, had written upon his tomb, "It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves"; but the manlier and finer attitude is to make a courageous attempt to shape the course we go along, and "make ourselves" on the journey. The Primate says, "we drift aimlessly, with no real personal grip upon the facts and their issues; and if this be a danger in regard to national affairs, it is equally so in the field of religious life and thought." Anything that stirs the human mind to action and endeavour is better than that colourless apathy which refuses to take an interest even in those things that are vital both to soul and body.

The superstitions connected with Christian burial have been curiously illustrated by a case that occurred the other day in County Wexford. An unfortunate man, who, perhaps, had experienced no happiness in 1903, instead of facing the coming year, committed suicide. The old practice was to exclude such persons from burial in consecrated ground. We all know the innumerable legends that have sprung from the custom of burying them at four cross-roads with a stake in their insides. Sometimes the stake grew up to be a magnificent tree, as was the case with Maud's Elm at Cheltenham. The Irish peasantry, who are nothing if not superstitious, seemed to think there was desecration in the attempt to lay the bones of a suicide where their fathers and relatives were lying, and resisted the burial with great success and determination. The practice of the Church is, however, the more charitable one, since it consists of giving the benefit of the doubt to every man, and assuming, wherever possible, that self-murder is only committed as an effect of insanity.

Professor Ray Lankester, in course of a recent lecture on "Extinct Animals," made some humorous remarks on the mouldy Dodo of the Oxford Natural History Museum—a University where they do not like mould. The lecturer spoke with just emphasis about the iniquitous "sport," falsely so called, that has destroyed such animals as the quagga, which only a few years ago was in such numbers in South Africa, and now has to be put into the category of the extinct. The very fact that so few years have sufficed for its extinction proves that the shooting of an animal so easily killed off is not to be called sport. The "extinct" category is one that will very soon have to be extended, unless legislators take due warning from the fate of the quagga and other animals to which the lecturer referred, and pass effective measures for their preservation.

From all parts of England the accounts are practically the same of the immense numbers of rats that are infesting the neighbourhood of farm buildings and the like places this winter. Probably much of this visitation is due to the flooding out of the rats from their usual quarters on the low-lying grounds and the banks of the streams, and their consequent migration to drier lodgings. Whatever the cause, the nuisance is considerable, and means for reducing their numbers are being sought eagerly. Ferreting out is long and detailed work. Poison has its dangers and drawbacks. For trapping them, no plan is better than the old-fashioned one of a barrel with the head knocked out and some stout brown paper or parchment stretched across the head. Feed the rats for some days or nights on this brown paper, to give them confidence; then cut it so that it makes a pitfall. Put water in the barrel beneath to drown the rats that fall through. Sometimes a brick is put up on

end in the water, to give a rat that falls in a chance of scrambling to the top of the brick and prolonging its wretched life. It is said that its splashing and struggles attract other rats; but even if this is true, which is to be doubted, the plan involves a refinement of cruelty altogether abominable.

Passengers by the mail steamers between Holyhead and Kingstown may often have noticed a couple of porpoises which have constantly frequented the harbour of the latter place for the past few years. Very often they escorted the mail steamers in or out of the harbour, their graceful gambols always attracting attention; and a regatta or yacht race seldom took place without the well-known pair putting in an appearance at it. It was with deep regret that the Kingstown people heard on New Year's Day that one of the old familiar friends had come to an untimely end by a steam-collier, while entering the harbour, striking it on the head with her propeller. How a creature which could play round the mail boats came to an ignoble end by the screw of a dirty collier is a mystery.

Some interesting evidence on the periodical migrations of crabs has been collected by the Northumberland Sea Fisheries Committee by means of the liberation of a number of marked specimens, and observation of the time and place at which some of them were subsequently recaptured. The experiment has resulted in the strong confirmation of the previous opinion, which it was impossible to prove positively before some such test was applied, that the marine species of crabs migrate under water in much the same way as the land-crabs of the New World on their well-known periodic change of quarters. The familiar species are now found to move out to sea for the winter months, and to return to the shallow waters in the spring. Sometimes, at any rate, they travel to a very considerable distance, irrespective of this movement, according to season, as is shown by the capture of one of these specimens from Northumberland, some months later, not far from Aberdeen. Such a lengthy trip as this is very possibly accidental and exceptional; but it points to a much greater travelling capacity on the part of the crab than we should naturally be inclined to credit it with.

The ridiculous prices now being paid for new varieties of potatoes, savours more of the tulip craze in Holland, when that gaudy flower was the rage, than of honest agriculture. The potato crop of 1903 was a poor one, but it is only history repeating itself, for we are told that in December, 1803, potatoes were so scarce in Ireland, that pigs were selling there for 2½d. per lb., the people not having stuff to feed the "rint-payer" with. The scarcity of potatoes is shown by the fact that in the last month of 1903 2,042,897 cwt., of the value of £379,000, were imported, as compared with 419,000 cwt. in the corresponding month of 1902. German growers are profiting well by the shortness of the British crop, having sent over 1,000,000 cwt., while from France about 344,000 cwt. were received. Those fabulous-priced potatoes now being sold may be the means of our raising crops which will make us independent of foreign produce, but he must be a bold man who will pay for seed potatoes as if they were Koh-i-Nürs.

Mr. Leslie Wood has drawn attention in a letter—which those who own land should study—to the obstacles in the way of reviving forestry in Great Britain. The return from forest trees is in itself too remote for ordinary cropping. What the owner of woodlands lived on used to be the underwoods, and recent changes of one kind and another have tended to lower their value. Hops are not grown to the extent they used to be, and accordingly the demand for hop-poles is greatly diminished. Wire netting and iron rails have been gradually ousting the old post and palings, and thus interfering with another demand for undergrowth, while wattled hurdles have been giving place to nets. Thus all round the demand for willow, hazel, and the other shrubs and trees that were grown in the copses has greatly ceased, and hence forestry has become a discouraged art in Great Britain.

The Town Council of Glasgow, which is immortally associated with the name of Bailie Nicol Jarvie, has an enthusiasm for temperance reform surpassing that of any other local body in the kingdom. Some little while ago it abolished barmails, in their own interest and in the interest of those who patronise them. Now it has passed another resolution recommending public-houses to be closed at ten o'clock every night. Throughout Scotland eleven was generally considered to be "elders' hours," but now the inhabitants of the North part of the kingdom have to be like the good boys of King George's time who "went to bed at ten." It will be interesting to note whether this enterprising Town Council be able or not to solve the problem that one of their countrymen said was impossible—namely, that of making people sober by Act of Parliament, or what comes to the same thing, order of the Town Council.

OLD MILLS IN LANDSCAPE.

It would be somewhat difficult to analyse with precision the causes of the curious charm possessed by water or wind mills in scenery. No doubt to some extent it is a matter of association, for the sentimental and the æsthetic are very closely allied. When Sir Walter Scott confessed that the sighing of a summer breeze through the pine trees at Abbotsford in certain moods brought the tears to his eyes, he was unconsciously explaining how the element of pathos comes into all

our admiration of Nature. It is not easy to say why, but all natural voices seem to carry with them something of melancholy. The dashing of waves on a rocky shore, and the low moan of the little wavelets crisping and curling on a low beach, in different ways suggest the same idea, while the wind in nearly all its manifestations strikes a note of what it would perhaps be an exaggeration to call sadness, and yet there is no other emotion that precisely explains it. In the mystical Orient, where the passions of the human heart seem to have been understood as nowhere else, there was, in old times, a sort of tacit convention that poems of a certain order should invariably begin with a reference to some ruin of an old building in which lovers had met illicitly, and

left behind them the memory of an unhappy passion. In this the principle is illustrated that association has much to do with the pleasure so closely allied to pain that one who is susceptible to it finds in landscape. In the case of a mill the ideas are, of course, quite different, since the building neither directly nor indirectly, consciously nor unconsciously, suggests anything in the nature of drama or passion. But, on the other hand, it contains association with what is perhaps an even deeper and more intimate possession of

the human heart, namely, the sentiment of labour. Perhaps it may sound odd to use the word sentiment in such a connection, and yet it is far from being incorrect. From the days of the primitive hunter it has devolved on man to find food for himself and his progeny. Not only so, but the whole course of development has been towards making him look forward and gather, not for the necessities of the hour only, but for the days that are to be. So much is this the case that we could imagine the inhabitants of Mars or another planet, who conceivably might not have developed this passion, looking upon our excessive desire to save as a species of insanity, as no doubt it is. Regard for the future is unquestionably natural, since we see the rudiments of it illustrated in the proceedings of such small creatures as



Charles Job.

ON WIMBLEDON COMMON.

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H. E. Murchison.

THE OLD MILL WHEEL.

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the squirrel, that lays up his hoard of nuts, and the bee, that gathers the honey. But to do so beyond what could possibly be needed is the miser's passion, and a clear form of insanity.

However this may be, the habit and necessity of labour have developed in our minds a certain sentiment in regard to it. The imagination is most easily excited in regard to the sense of striking and dramatic events, but there is a quieter, which is by no means on that account a feebleness, interest excited by the sense of labour. And this comes in its best form when the work in question is connected with the primitive duty of providing bread for man. To look on the wide hedgerowed fields of England, and to remember that, since history began for us, here the labourer sowed and reaped and mowed—answered the awakening bugle in the morning and welcomed the curfew at night, till he, too, was called to rest and to join "the great and mighty nations of the dead"—is to excite a train of deepest reflection; for the generations of men who have trooped one after another across this stage, whose setting is the green earth and the skies and clouds and rivers, appear at such times to have little more significance than those leaves of the forest trees which burgeon and blow in spring, and in autumn wither and are blown about by the equinoctial gales. Some such feeling as that the

as that of a red-hot radical, and declared that his father and his grandfather and his great-grandfather before him had all carried their corn in this way, and that it must be presumption on my part to suggest an improvement.

However, the most conservative mind and class is unable to withstand change for ever, and when it did come it came with a rush. Up to thirty or forty years ago milling had remained practically at a standstill. It was mostly done by water-power or wind-power, and with the same kind of stones in most of the rural districts. The flour, too, was distributed in the old way, by means of the miller's cart and a "poker," but America, which has revolutionised so much, made a change in this too. Better means of grinding corn were discovered, means that left very much less to chance than had been done under the old system, and so ruin gradually came over the mills. In many cases the great wheels have been allowed to go out of order, ivy has clambered over the walls, birds nest in the granaries, and what was in the middle of the last century a busy and thriving place, has taken the appearance of an ancient and crumbling ruin, looking in many cases very much older than it really is. Of course, such a collapse was bound to be temporary in its nature. Windmills, after having



Charles Job.

ON THE ARUN.

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writer, at least, cannot help associating with the sight of an ancient and ruining mill. Here the jovial red-faced miller, father, son, and grandson, ground the corn into flour, overcharged his customers for their multure, laughed and jested, and lived as though the circumstances around him were not fleeting and evanescent, but fixed and permanent. And it is easy to draw vivid imaginary pictures of the people who in old days took their corn to be ground. In very early times the farmer had to confine himself almost exclusively to the use of the pack-horse, because roads were so ill-made and bad that a wain of corn could scarcely have been dragged by the best horses he possessed. So he generally carried it in panniers; and, indeed, in some of the remoter parts of Wales this practice still continues. Not many years ago, I remember seeing a little farmer taking his corn to the mill or market in this way. As it happened, that week the quantity required was less than usual, and only sufficient to fill one pannier, whereupon to keep the balance even the man had filled the other with stones. Greatly daring, I suggested to him that it would be a more economical form of transport and kinder to the horse if he divided the contents of the pannier into the two, putting half in one and half in the other, and throwing away the stones: but this proposal he rejected

become to all appearances obsolete, or at least obsolescent, are again being revived. We have had occasion to notice in our pages quite recently some of the many new inventions in the shape of windmills that have lately been brought upon the market, and in Liverpool and some other of our great towns huge steam mills have grown up and are likely to grow. This is the way of human progress. In reality it is only a pleasant bit of sentiment that causes us to mourn the decay of old mills, whose appearance and sound seemed to agree so absolutely with the tranquil English landscape. The work will be better done by the mills that have supplanted them, till they in time grow obsolete and become superseded by new inventions. In the meantime our photographs show how much the mills added to the charm of the scenery, and it is possible to recognise that without mourning too much over the passing away of that type of all millers, "whose berd, as any sowe or fox, was reed."

At the present moment not only do they afford agreeable touches for the camera of the artistic photographer, but the ingenuity of the owners has in many instances been sufficient to find a new use for them. One old mill that we know, whose wheel is turned by the tidal water of the Severn, is now employed to grind a special food for fattening chickens,



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THE MILL AT EVENING.

J. C. S. Mummery.



Charles Job.

ON A SUSSEX COMMON.

Copyright

and thus may be said to fulfil its original function. Another picturesque old building situated in a pleasant valley among the Cotswolds is used to store flax in, there having been an attempt made during recent years to revive the cultivation of that once popular farm crop. Alas, these are the fortunate ones. Some have been turned into storehouses, or even used for keeping poultry in, and many that we know are disused altogether, the wheel standing idle or moving automatically to the slow compulsion of the stream, no longer generating force for the mill, but turning, turning, turning in an endless and useless round.

FROM THE FARMS.

COMING HORSE SHOWS.

AS soon as January comes it is time for owners of pedigree stock to begin thinking seriously of the approaching shows. That of the Shire Horse Society is to be held as usual at the Agricultural Hall, Islington, on Tuesday, February 23rd, this being the twenty-fifth exhibition held by this body. The very handsome sum of 2,000 guineas is to be offered in the form of prize-money, gold and silver cups, and gold medals. Seven classes are provided for stallions, and seven for mares and fillies, and, in addition to the class prizes, each Reserve animal will be awarded £3, each Highly Commended £2, and each Commended £1. Among the special awards, the principal one is the society's Gold Challenge Cup value 100 guineas and the Champion Cup value £25 for the best stallion in the show, the society's Gold Challenge Cup value 50 guineas and the Champion Cup value £25 for the best mare or filly in the show. The judges on this occasion are to be Mr. T. B. Freshney, South Somercotes, Louth, Lincolnshire, Mr. Henry Smith, Cropwell Butler, Nottingham, and Mr. James Whinnerah, Warton Hall, Carnforth. Entries close on January 18th. Closely following the Shire Horse Show is the London Hackney Show, which is to be held from March 1st to 4th inclusive. A sum of close upon £1,500 is offered in prizes and cups. Immediately after the Hackney Show comes the London Show of the Hunters' Improvement Society, which will be held in conjunction with the shows of the Royal Commission on Horse-breeding and the Polo and Riding Pony Society. The prizes for hunters amount in value to close upon £1,200. Entries close on February 1st.

WORK FOR CHRISTMAS DAY.

Although it is somewhat late to notice the fact, we cannot help making a brief record of a circumstance that will probably be looked back upon in the years to come as a great curiosity. In Northumberland and Berwickshire, where Christmas is not much regarded, that day was devoted on several farms to the task of getting in the potatoes. There had been no previous opportunity since September, when, in the natural order of things, the crop would have been gathered, and eventually the tubers were extracted from beds of rainwater and mud. They can be of no use whatever as human food, and we doubt if they have any great value even for the purpose of feeding cattle. We notice in a contemporary that in the same districts harvest operations were still proceeding on Christmas Day, but here again the crops have been so utterly spoiled that farmers had given them up long ago, and were only carting some of the straw home for bedding. The year 1903 will be long remembered in that district, and judging from what we have seen of 1904, there is little prospect of any great improvement.

FEEDING COWS.

In Vinton's Agricultural Almanack for 1904 Mr. Primrose McConnell has a practical and interesting article on this subject. He says that about six months ago the chance remark of a friend that it did not pay to give more than half-a-crown's worth of cake and meal per head a week set him thinking on the subject. He remarks naively, "the curious thing is that, though I had done as much figuring and calculation about cows as any man on earth, yet I had entirely missed this point." On looking at the text-books he found that 4s. and 4s. 6d. were more common than the half-crown scale. On the other hand, he found that for the lower sum it was possible to conform to the feeding standards and albuminoid ratios. Half-a-crown, as he points out, represents from six to eight pounds daily of a mixture of cakes and meal, and this, he says, with an *ad libitum* supply of forage and roots, was sufficient. Last winter he tried this scale, with perfectly satisfactory results. Previously it had cost him about 4s. In the end he found he had been spending £1 a day too much and only getting 5s. extra for milk. The difference had been either going on to the cows' back or being lost in their manure, while the risk from milk fever and other diseases was increased. He is now strongly in favour of moderate feeding, as he says that overfeeding has an astringent effect on the milk glands of a cow. He describes the last season as the "infernal period of wet weather which ever blew," but is of opinion that if the weather returns to its normal position it will be worth the while of dairy farmers to try the half-crown scale of feeding.

THE CORNISH PASTY.

THERE is an old Cornish proverb which asserts that the devil has never dared to show his face in Cornwall, because, if he had so dared, some Cornish housewife would have put him in a pasty. An 1, indeed, the statement, blending as it does subtle testimonies to the self-righteousness of the Cornish man and the culinary ability of the Cornish woman, is founded on very solid fact. For it would certainly seem that the substance must be very remarkable indeed which the native-born Cornish cook could not turn to good account in the creation of a pasty.

The Cornish pasty is Cornwall's proudest boast. More than our wrestling, though the world has produced no better wrestling than ours; more than our cream, though our cream is as immeasurably superior to that of Devonshire as Devonshire's is to that of the rest of England; more even than our historic past, and the past of our little Duchy is a proud story, we pride ourselves upon the Cornish pasty. And why? Because other counties and countries have produced good wrestlers and good wrestling; other districts produce good rich cream (we have even heard of people who prefer the Devon product to ours); our historic past we share, more or less, with the other people of these islands; but the pasty is ours, and ours only. It can no more be produced elsewhere, or by other people than ours, than its merits can be described to the unfortunate who has never known it. It is, in fact, peculiar to Cornwall and the Cornish people. Born of necessity and nurtured by cumulative experience, it has now reached perfection by virtue of tradition, and every Cornish woman makes pasties as her mothers made them before her for generations.

That the pasty was born of necessity is easily proven, for the pasty—the Cornish pasty, that is—is the highest attainment in the art of making a little go a very long way. Had Cornwall been a rich, arable territory where food was plentiful and life easy, the Cornish pasty would never have been brought into existence; for it is a certain truth that wherever and whenever food is cheap and easily come by, the art of cooking naturally declines. If the Cornish labourer and miner of old time had been able to obtain meat every day of the week, and every variety of food had been ready to hand, it would not have been incumbent upon the Cornish housewife to invent a means of introducing diversity where there was only sameness, and fatness

where poverty made everything lean. For there is an element of unexpectedness about the pasty which is one of its chiefest charms, and the happy labourers and miners who eat it daily, year in, year out, all their lives, never complain—as, indeed, they have no cause to do—of lack of variety in their diet.

Whether it is “the seasoning wot does it,” or whether there is some still more subtle reason for the success of the pasty, it is impossible to say. There can be no doubt, however, that seasoning plays a very large part in its creation. The Cornish housewife has the most intimate and accurate knowledge of the value of all the homely herbs, and thyme, mint, and parsley are three of her most powerful allies. The hedgerows, too, are made to provide their share, and many an insignificant weed is pressed into the culinary service. Leeks, onions, sage, and parsnips figure very largely, while potatoes and turnips provide the bulk of the feast. The result is the Cornish pasty—the one and only unique thing in the realm of English cookery.

F. W. SAUNDERSON.

JANUARY MAGAZINES.

THE *Fortnightly Review* is much less political than usual, and contains some weighty general articles. One of the most interesting is the character study of Herbert Spencer by W. H. Hudson, from which we take the following description:

“You saw that he was scrupulous about every detail; that he measured his speech to the exact fit of his meaning, and never indulged in our common habit of reckless and haphazard assertion; while his diction was marvellously chaste and accurate, his sentences finished and correct. I suppose all this challenged one, and made one rather uncomfortably solicitous about one's own intellectual and grammatical responsibilities. But you had only to get thoroughly accustomed to these peculiarities, and you realised that they were simply upon the surface. The seeming aloofness of the man disappeared, and you found beneath the reticence and the coldness which first troubled you a large, simple, and eminently sympathetic nature.”

There is an article, to which our readers will turn with special attention, on capping in the hunting-field, by Mr. W. B. Woodgate, and he justifies capping, mostly on the ground that hunting has become so expensive. The maintenance of a hunting establishment he estimates at an outlay of £700 per annum for each day per week that the hounds hunt, and he goes on to total up the expenses of the hunting-man in this way: “The stable expenses for actual maintenance of each horse kept exclusively for hunting may be estimated at £70 a year. We are referring to those popular countries where hunting is good and alien invasion to be expected unless restrained. This £70 a year is made up by forage, rental value of stabling, wages of grooms and strappers, farriery and clothing, but hardly inclusive of wear and tear of saddlery and other harness-room outlays. Then, as to the question of re-mount. This is more difficult to estimate; some men will give fancy prices for hunters with great reputations, while others have a pious horror of riding upon too much money. But even for the latter class £30 per annum re-mount expenses per hunter might not be by any means an excessive estimate, allowing three to four seasons' average duration of a hunter in his good service before he is sent to the sale, the shafts, or to the kennels.” The number is a good one, and contains many other attractive essays.

The *National Review* is one of the most vigorous campaigners in the great fiscal battle, and has secured a prize this month in the shape of an article from Mr. Charles Booth, which probably will delight the Protectionists. Several other more or less eminent writers continue to deepen the obscurity which shrouds this somewhat boring controversy, from which no one seems able to extract the really essential facts. Many readers will be interested to know that our eminent poet laureate under his ancient pseudonym, “Lamia,” resumes his garden prose under the name of “The Poet's Diary.” Of the other contents the article on British manners is perhaps the most amusing. We quote the following from it:

“The French nation has undoubtedly put women on a higher scale than has the British, and the greater refinement of their social conception is no less indisputably due to this fact. The position of a wife and mother in a French family is legally and instinctively a more honourable one, and the mother-in-law, though often the subject of ridicule on the stage, enjoys an authority and consideration which that relationship is totally deprived of with us. Wife-beating is unknown among our Gallic friends, excitable though they are; and, as everyone knows at home, that pastime is commonly indulged in by our lower classes at the expense of a 2s. 6d. fine. In England many little things testify to the accepted ‘superiority’ of the male sex. A woman bows first, as to her lord and master; in France a man salutes his idol whether noticed or unnoticed, and stands with his head uncovered if she stops to speak to him, while the younger men

never omit to kiss a lady's hand, to shake which would seem an impertinence!”

In the *Monthly Review* the most literary article is that on Tennyson and Dante by the President of Magdalen. The writer shows that the very spirit of Alighiera passed into Alfred Tennyson, but at first it was at second hand; afterwards the modern poet worshipped his great forerunner, and the bust of Dante, as many will remember, was the first object that struck the visitor on entering Farringford. “What is there wanting in Goethe which the other has?” Spedding asked. Alfred Tennyson replied, “The Divine.” The story of Sir Frederick Pollock's nurse is repeated. “He is a great friend of Sir Frederick Pollock's. There is a bust of him on his staircase. He is a very severe-looking gentleman.” The article, though full of amusing anecdotes, is able and learned, and the number is an exceptionally good one.

Sir Conan Doyle and W. W. Jacobs continue to be the chief attractions of the *Strand Magazine*; but in this great budget of pictures and letterpress there is much for everybody, and a good selection from the work of the popular authors of the day.

In *Longman's Magazine* Mr. Andrew Lang very wittily rallies the authors of “Wisdom While You Wait” on account of their second publication. It is rather hard on them, however, to put in his mock examination paper that the examinee has to “estimate the value of either text, if contributed to the humorous column of the ‘Globe and Traveller.’” State the market price of either jest in the early days of Charles Lamb.”

A monthly magazine on entirely new lines would seem almost impossible, the periodical world being so crowded, but evidently it is not, for Messrs. George Newnes, Limited, announce that on the 12th inst. they will publish the first number of *Technics*, an organ for technical students. The contributors include such authorities as Sir W. de W. Abney and Sir William White, until recently chief constructor to the Navy; and when it is taken into consideration that there are at present over half a million students enrolled at our Technical Institutes, apart from the teachers, and the large portion of the general public interested in science, we have every reason to believe the magazine will be an instant success. No expense has been spared in the production of *Technics*; it will be profusely illustrated, and printed on good paper. The price will be 9d. net.

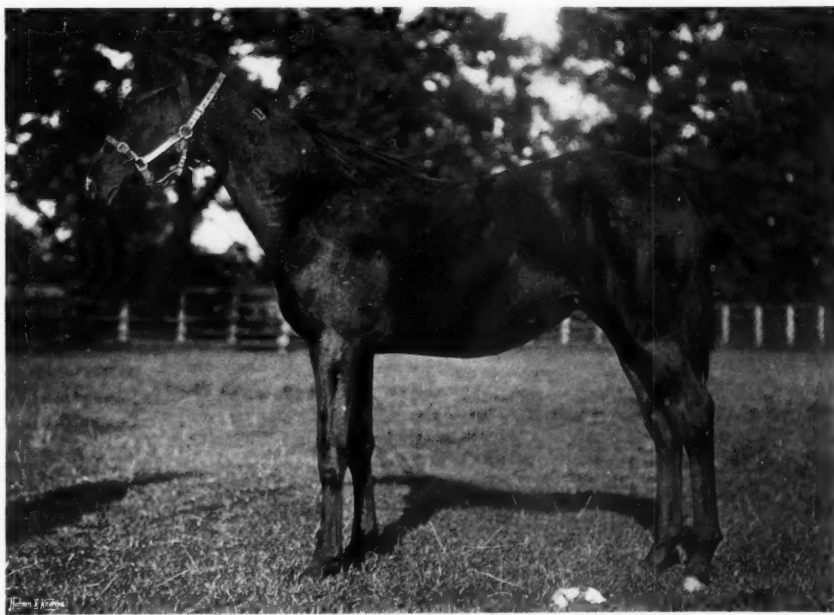
The *English Illustrated Magazine*, after undergoing many vicissitudes, appears to have settled down into a sort of organ for glorifying tea-party heroes. One of its features this month is an article somewhat funnily entitled “British Song-Poets of To-day.” At first sight we took it for an essay on natural history, with a misprint of “song-poets” for “song-birds,” but on turning up the article found it embellished not with dicky-birds, but with photographs of ladies and gentlemen who do the oc-verses in various newspapers. Whoever is curious about the author of “Three Little Maids,” or “Life's a Cigar,” or “Dewdrops,” or “Beauty's Eyes,” will find the authors of these immortal ditties, and their signatures and specimens of their handwriting, enshrined in these chaste pages. Some of the other articles are even more entertaining. Mr. Chesterton, seeking for the greatest figure of the nineteenth century, finds his judgment divided between A. R. Wallace and Walt Whitman. Austin Dobson and Maurice Hewlett are hymned in separate strains. But the most curious of all the articles in the number is one entitled “A Chat about Pheasants,” in the illustrations to which the author-artist has let his imagination run riot. The title under one of them is “Many a time I see'd kestrels take young pheasants,” a remark which he seems to have accepted on the word of a keeper, but which no one who understands country life will take so ingenuously.

THE SOUTHCOURT STUD.

AFTER a finish as close and, in its way, as exciting as his struggle with Persimmon for the Derby, St. Frusquin stands at the head of the winning sires of 1903, with Gallinule—chiefly by the aid of Pretty Polly—as a good second.

This place is his by right of succession, for his father, St. Simon, and his half-brother, Persimmon, have both occupied the same position in the past. Of the famous sons of St. Simon none resembles his father more than St. Frusquin does. There can be no doubt of this in the minds of anyone who will compare St. Frusquin with his half-brother Persimmon, and will again put the photograph now given beside one of those taken of St. Simon in his prime.

St. Frusquin, however, is one of those horses whose name is destined, in all probability, to



Kouch. A FINE ST. FRUSQUIN FOAL OUT OF ORPHRYS. Copyright—"C.L."

remain as one of the great sires of the Turf. If we look forward we see a great prospect before him. There are four two year olds of his that go into winter quarters with a reputation—Lord Falmouth's Fiancee (hitherto unbeaten), Hymenæus, and Mr. Leopold de Rothschild's St. Amant and Pieria, the genealogy of whose dam, Pie Powder, goes back, through Nellie, to Hermit and that Newminster line which has always been a favourite strain at Southcourt.

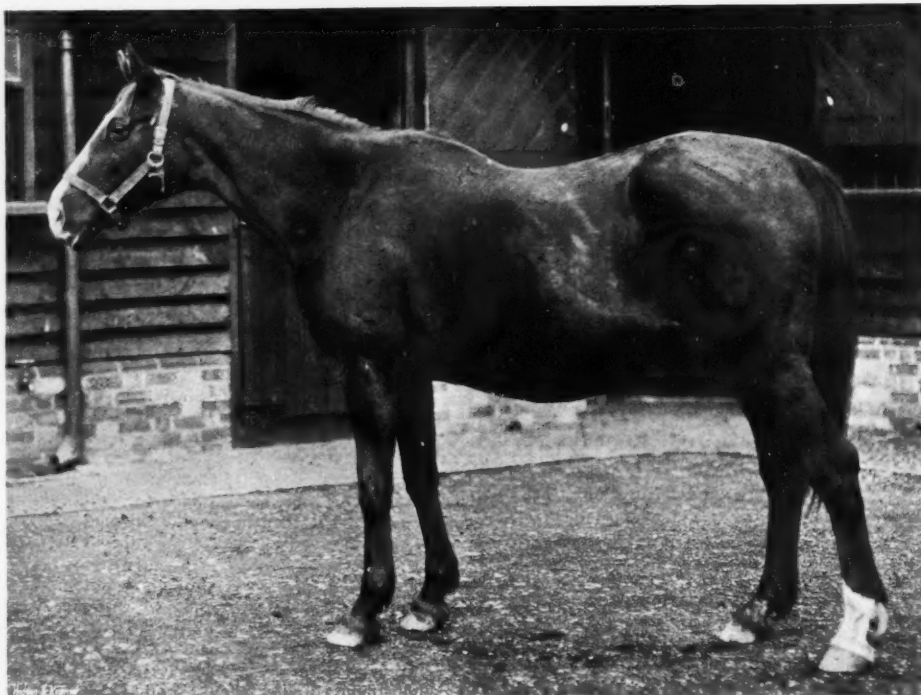
It is interesting to turn from the portrait of St. Frusquin to that of his dam, Isabel, a mare by Plebeian out of Parma, the latter a beautiful mare, who was the property of Mr. T. Price, once a well-known breeder in Bucks, from whose stud both Isabel and Biserta were purchased by Mr. Rothschild. Again we can peep into the future when we look at the racing-like foal by St. Frusquin out of Orphrys, by Orme, who will surely be known to fame some day or other. No youngster has better blood in his

veins. He goes back to Bend Or through the mighty Ormonde, and thus combines in the direct line the blood of the two greatest horses of our day—St. Simon and Ormonde, of whom it will be always recorded that no one ever knew quite how fast they could gallop. Readers of COUNTRY LIFE who care little for the Turf, but are interested in the problems of breeding, may find a pleasure in following the future career of this foal.

Lady Loverule, now in her twenty-third year, has given to Mr. Rothschild's stud one of the most promising two year olds of the season in St. Amant, a bay colt that will probably be enrolled next year, if all goes well, among the classic winners. This colt also inherits the Hermit strain through his dam. On the maternal side the line of Hermit seems to transmit its fine qualities without the delicacy which sometimes has marred the career of this racing tribe.

Turn now to the portrait of another of the pillars of the Southcourt Stud, Galeazzo, by Galopin out of a Kisber mare, thus bringing into the stud one of the best strains of Blacklock blood now to be had. We are not surprised to learn that his subscription is full. No one can look at the portrait of this horse without recognising the fact that in make and shape our first-rate thoroughbreds are as true as they are beautiful. It is said sometimes that the modern race-horse is a mere galloping machine, a sprinter without power or

stamina. Yet it may be asked confidently of any judge of a horse whether he would desire a better-shaped one than this from which to breed race-horses or weight-carriers. Look at the shoulder, the depth of girth, the spring and power of the forehand, and the propelling strength of the quarters. The more we study both the outward form and the pedigrees of the thorough-bred horse, the more strongly we



W. A. Rouch.

ISABEL, DAM OF ST. FRUSQUIN.

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ST. FRUSQUIN.

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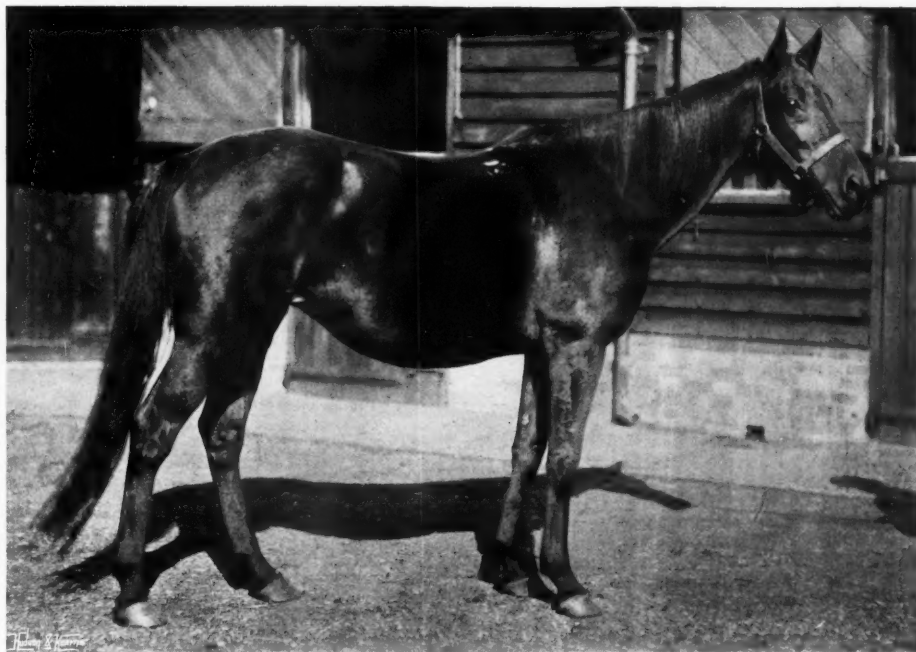
feel that we have in him a source of speed, strength, and stamina from which we can breed any class of horse that is desired. It is quite true, of course, that horses like Galeazzo are not within the reach of the ordinary hunter-breeder, but there are others of the same line that are. Nor do we forget that the great Blacklock and Birdcatcher lines are as famous in their way as ancestors of hunting as of racing blood.

A study of pedigrees will convince us that many of our best hunters by thorough-bred sires can be traced back to Blacklock. In this way we can see how racing and the great studs like Southcourt do greatly affect the breed of horses all over the country. Of the other horses and mares depicted here, we have Lactantius, a son of Petrarch, thus going back through Orlando and Touchstone. The last named was one of the greatest stayers that ever ran on the English turf, a horse that had a fine constitution, and moved as freely at thirty as he did at three years old. Then there is Goletta, and Catkin, dam of Catgut, by Lactantius, is a very useful type of mare, full of quality, and just the mare to mate with a stout horse like Lactantius.

We can thus see in these pictures horses whose pedigrees are summaries of the history of the English race-horse, and we can trace the plan of the Southcourt Stud, and note how this fine collection of horses has been built up, by taking the Hermit mares as a tap-root, and on them grafting the great running and staying lines of the winning families of Blacklock, Birdcatcher, Touchstone, Orlando, all of which may be carried back to Eclipse, and perhaps through Marske to the Darley Arabian.

The Southcourt paddocks are not far from Leighton Buzzard, and may be seen on the slope of the hill as you travel by the London and North Western to Tring. Unfortunately, but a few months ago, and before the triumph of St. Frusquin, which would have delighted but not astonished him, Ted Burroughes, the stud groom, passed away at the early age of fifty-two. He will not soon be forgotten by those who recognise how great and worthy a share he had in the many successes of the Southcourt Stud on the Turf and at the stud. He will be deeply regretted by the Rothschild family, who were never unmindful of faithful and intelligent service.

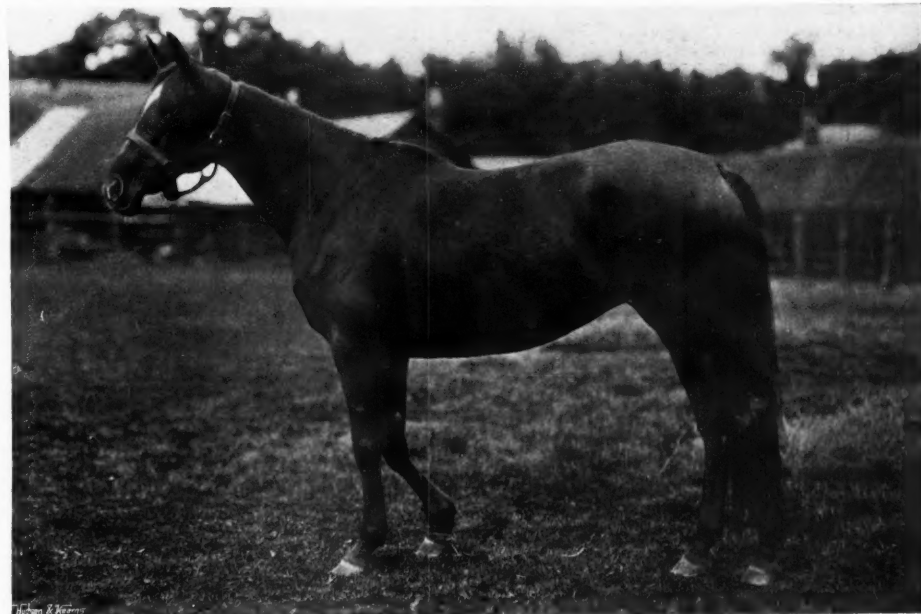
But though the man has passed away, the system and traditions of the stud remain, and the visitor will note the same care in management and the perfection of detail which are so necessary to success. The stallions are full of fire and life, and the mares have the air of dignified and placid content which marks the long-descended matrons of the Turf. The Southcourt Stud has the advantage that it belongs to a family institution of continuity of system and management, where each generation enters into the labours of its predecessor, and in its turn sows the seed of the triumphs of those that come after. These great family studs become, as it were, reservoirs of the best blood, which cannot be taken from us by any inducements that money can afford. While we have such studs as the Southcourt, we can afford to regard with indifference, or even with satisfaction, the purchase of good horses to go abroad, for the



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GOLETTA.

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LADY LOVERULE, DAM OF ST. AMANT.

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CATKIN, DAM OF CATGUT.

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reputation of such animals brings a score of buyers to our markets, and still makes us the controlling power in the trade in bloodstock.

IN THE GARDEN.

KEEP THE FRUIT TREES CLEAN.

THERE is no doubt that cleanliness is very important in promoting successful fruit culture. Whatever may be the excuses for allowing injurious moss growths to cover the limbs and branches of old standard trees and provide natural harbours for the various insect pests that make a prey of fruit, there can be no reason why pyramids, bush trees, cordons, and espaliers in gardens should be allowed to get, and, worse still, remain, in this deplorable condition. Yet it is so, as scores of illustrations show, in spite of all that has been written on the subject from time to time.

For the sake of appearance, if nothing else, it is worth while keeping garden fruit trees clean; but of course there is another and a more important reason, namely, their health and vigour. By way of comparison, then, take a fruit garden in which cleanliness plays a part in the cultural routine. The bark of the trees in the open quarters and on the walls presents a bright shining appearance that denotes good health, and one can tell at once that it is no place for moss growth and insect pests. How different the garden where the trees are neglected in this respect! The stems and branches are nurseries of moss growths or covered with a slimy green, and where canker first opened wounds one observes the woolly matter that denotes the detestable presence of American blight, and closer examination also reveals the fact that other insect foes find a harbour there where they may multiply at will. In the meantime these moss-covered and insect-infested trees are suffering in health, and are likely to do so as long as they are allowed to continue in a state of filth.

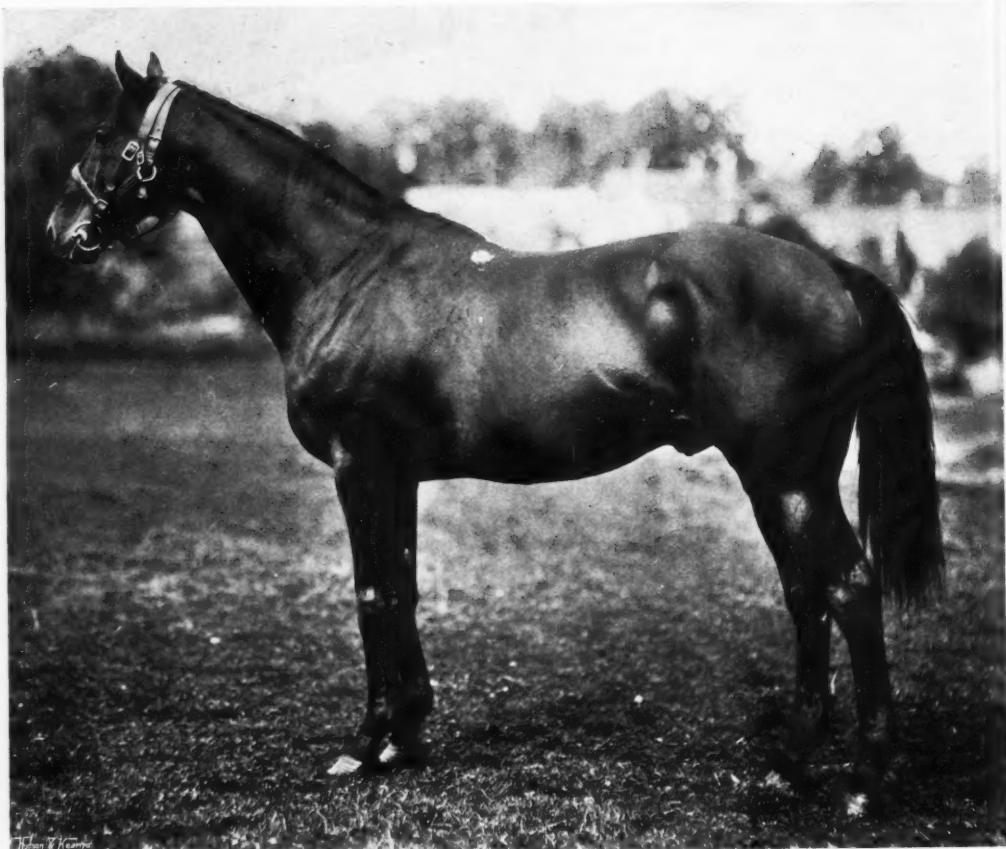
The moment is opportune for looking into the matter, because if trees are properly washed in the winter when growth is dormant, they will be comparatively free from insect pests during the following summer. Unfortunately there is a tendency to rely too much on Nature in the destruction of insects, and if we happen to get a fairly severe winter, many growers satisfy themselves that insect life will not live through it. But Nature

protects her own, be it counted as good or evil in the eyes of cultivators, and an illustration is afforded by that common pest of the Apple, American blight. Even when snow is on the ground and the thermometer registers several degrees of frost, the larvæ may be found alive and plentiful under the tufts of woolly matter that protect them.

The objects of winter washing are two-fold—first, for the removal of the moss and lichen growths that are injurious to the trees, spoil their appearance, and provide lurking-places for insect enemies; and, secondly, for the destruction of the pests in a hibernating stage. In every garden, we think, the purchase of a good knapsack sprayer should be treated as an investment, as these implements may be put to so many useful purposes. For winter washing a sprayer is a great saving in time and labour, and by its use parts of trees can be dressed that could hardly be touched by any other means.

It is fortunate that the bark and outer covering of the buds of fruit trees in a dormant state are capable of withstanding dressings of insecticides powerful enough to destroy moss and lichen growths, as well as the eggs of many injurious insects, because this allows for the use of that excellent winter wash known as caustic alkali solution. It is safe to say that there is nothing better for winter application; it is cheap and easily made. If the solution is to be made at home, get $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of ground caustic soda and $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of pearl ash (crude commercial potash). These should be dissolved in a pail of water, and in the meantime a handful of soft soap should be dissolved in a little boiling water and be poured into the solution, adding sufficient soft water to make five gallons. It may be well to observe, however, that horticultural sundriesmen have directed their attention to this matter, and to save trouble the solution may be obtained ready prepared for diluting. As the solution is strongly caustic, it is injurious to both skin and clothing; therefore gloves and an old suit of clothes should be worn during application.

All that is necessary to serve the desired purpose is to just wet the parts of the tree, and by means of a sprayer the solution is easily applied to pyramids, espaliers, and trees on walls, as well as small fruits, like Gooseberries and Currants. The effect of the solution is soon apparent, as green slime disappears, moss and lichen growths are killed, and the bark assumes a clean,



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GALEAZZO.

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SOUTHCOURT STUD: LACTANTIUS.

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bright-looking appearance, to say nothing of the destruction wrought amongst hibernating insects. Finally, it should be remembered that fruit trees are not unlike human beings in certain respects. Outward cleanliness is essential to good health; and by the same law fruit trees suffer through the pores of the bark being choked by dirt and obnoxious growths.

These notes are of the utmost importance to planters of new orchards, as well as to those who have already fruit trees in their gardens. Fruit culture must be a failure unless the greatest attention is paid to these apparently small details. Once, for example, an Apple orchard is allowed to get infested with American blight, it is hopeless to attempt even the severest remedy. It spreads with such rapidity that drastic measures at first are needful.

THE BRAMBLES.

The Bramble family (*Rubus*) is found throughout the whole of the north temperate zone, and contains about seventy species altogether, but only a dozen or so of these are really ornamental, the remainder being principally the common Blackberries of our hedges, none of which is a garden plant, though

possessing a decided economic value. In this country, however, the Blackberry is a very much neglected fruit, though, if taken in hand and treated on the same lines as a Raspberry, it would in course of time, by selection, yield surprising results. A proof of this is afforded at Kew, where, in the collection of *Rubus*, fine fruits can be seen every year, and these are borne on practically wild plants that only have an annual thinning out of the old wood, in addition to being kept free from weeds. By raising plants from seed of some of our best wild forms, and rigidly selecting the plants for a few generations, a race of Blackberries would be obtained bearing fruits as large as Mulberries. This would not be a very long or costly operation, as the plants come into bearing in three years or so from seed; and if results like those to be seen at Kew can be obtained by merely keeping the plants free from weeds and other plants that can injure them, how much better returns could be obtained by a selection of the best fruiting plants. That there is a market for good Blackberries is shown by the fact that quite inferior fruit commands a ready sale at fair prices during the season, as most people, especially in towns, are partial to Blackberries.

WITCH ANN.

By M. E. FRANCIS.

ANN KERLEY had lived in great peace and contentment for more than seventy-three years. Her neighbours considered her a good plain 'ooman, who always had a kind word for everyone, and was so ready to do a good turn for another body as heart could wish. But, lo and behold! one fine morning old Ann Kerley awoke to find herself a witch. The previous day had been sultry and wild, with spells of fierce sunshine that smote down upon honest people's heads as they toiled in cornfield or potato-plot, bringing out great drops of sweat on sunburnt faces, and forcing more than one labourer to supplement the shade and comfort of his broad chip hat by a cool moist cabbage leaf. Withal furious gusts of wind rose every now and then—storm wind, old Jan Belbin said, and he was considered wonderful weather-wise—wind that set the men's shirt-sleeves flapping for all the world like the sleeves of a racing jockey, and blew the women's aprons into the air, and twisted the maids' hats round upon their heads if they so much as crossed the road to the well. Yet this wind would drop as suddenly as it had sprung up; the land would lie all bathed in fiery heat, and a curious sense of uneasiness and expectancy would seem to pervade the whole of Nature. The very beasts were disquieted in their pasture; the corn stood up straight and stiff, each ear, as it were, on the alert; not a leaf stirred in hedgerow or tree-top; and then "all to once," as Jan Belbin pointed out, the storm wind sprang up again, tossing the golden waste of wheat hither and thither like a troubled sea, and making every individual branch and twig creak and groan.

Twilight was at last closing in with brooding stillness, and a group of lads, who had been working for an hour or two in the allotments, gathered idly round the gate, gossiping, and some of them smoking, before proceeding homewards. It was too dark, as Joe Pilcher declared, to see the difference between a 'tater and a turnip, and 'twas about time they were steppin' anyways. He was in the act of relating some interesting anecdote with regard to last Saturday's practice in the cricket-field, when he broke off, and pointed up the stony path which led past the allotments.

"Hullo! Whatever's that?" he cried.

The bent outline of a small figure could be seen creeping along the irregular line of hedge. It was apparently hump-backed, and wore a kind of hood projecting over its face.

"'Tis a wold hag, seemin'ly," said Jim Ford, craning forward over the top rail.

"There!" cried Joe, "I took it for a sprite, but I don't know as I shouldn't be just so much afeared of a witch any day. It be a witch, sure."

"Don't be a sammy," interposed an older man. "'Tis nothin' but some poor wold body what has been gatherin' scroff. They've felled a tree up-along in wood, an' she've a-been a-pickin' up all as she can lay hands on for her fire. There, 'tis wold Ann Kerley. I can see her now. She've a-got a big nitch o' sticks upon her back, an' she do croopy down under the weight on't, an' she've a-tied her handkercher over her bonnet, poor body, to keep it fro' blowin' away. There's your hag for ye, Joe."

"I be afeared, I say," insisted Joe, feigning to tremble violently. He considered himself a wag, and had quite a following of the village good-for-nothings. "'Tis a witch, sartin sure, 'tis a witch. Don't ye go for to overlook I, Ann Kerley, for I tell 'ee I won't a-bear it."

As the unconscious Ann drew nearer he squatted down behind the gate-post, loudly announcing that he was that frayed he was fair bibbering. Two or three of the others made believe to hide themselves too, pretending to shiver in imitation of their leader, and peering out like him between the bars of the gate. Such unusual proceedings could not fail to attract the old

woman's attention, and she paused in astonishment when she reached the spot.

"Why, whatever be to do here?" she enquired.

Joe uttered a kind of howl, and burrowed into the hedge.

"She be overlookin' of we," he shouted. "The witch be overlookin' of we."

"Don't ye take no notice, my dear woman," said Abel Bond, the man who had before spoken. "They be but a lot o' silly bwoys a-talkin' nonsense."

"Witch!" cried Joe.

"Witch! witch!" echoed the rest.

Ann looked from one to the other of the grinning faces that kept popping up over the rail, and disappearing again.

"Whatever be they a-talkin' on?" she gasped.

"You be a witch, Ann," cried Joe. "If you was served right you'd be ducked in the pond. E-es, that you would."

A small boy, fired with a desire to distinguish himself, picked up a clod of earth, and flung it at her with so true an aim that it grazed her cheek.

"Take that, witch!" he cried.

Joe, not to be outdone, threw another; pellets of earth and even small pebbles began to assail the old woman from the whole line.

Abel Bond promptly came to the rescue, knocking the ring-leaders' heads together, and impartially distributing kicks and cuffs among the remainder.

"Bad luck to the witch!" cried the irrepressible Joe, wriggling himself free; and the shout was taken up by the rest, even as they dodged the avenger.

"Bad luck, yourself," retorted poor Ann, trembling with wrath and alarm. "I'm sure nar'n o' ye do deserve such very good luck arter insultin' a poor wold 'ooman what never did ye no harm." And she went on her way, grumbling and indignant.

But when she had reached her own little house in the "dip" and had walked up the flagged path between the phlox bushes and the lavender, and pussy had come rubbing against her legs in greeting, her anger cooled; and by the time her kettle had begun to sing over a bright wood fire, and she had laid out her modest repast of bread and watercress, she fairly laughed to herself.

"Lard! they bwoys be simple!" she said. "They did call I a witch, along o' my havin' tied my hankercher over my head. Abel did give it to 'em, but I reckon he didn't hurt 'em much. Bwoys! there, they do seem so hard as stooness very near. 'Witch!' says they. Well, that's a notion."

She chuckled again, and set down a saucer of milk for the cat to lap.

"They'll be callin' you a witch next, puss," said she, and went to bed laughing.

Ann carried her bucket to the well as usual next morning, feeling rather more cheerful than was her custom. Rain had fallen shortly after daybreak, but the sky was now clear and limpid, and the air cool. On her way to the well her attention was caught by a loud clucking in her neighbour's garden, and looking across the dividing hedge she descried a hen violently agitating herself inside a coop, while her brood of yellow downy ducklings some few hours old paddled in and out of a pool beside the path.

"Well, of all the beauties!" cried Ann, clapping her hands together until the bucket rattled on her arm; "why, Mrs. Clark, my dear, you must have hatched out every one—'tis a wonderful bit o' luck."

"E-es, indeed," agreed Mrs. Clark, "hatchin' out so late an' all. I hope I may do well wi' 'em."

"I hope so indeed," agreed Ann heartily, and hobbled on towards the well.

One or two women were there, who responded to her greeting with a coldness which she did not at once realise.

"Fine rain this mornin'," she remarked cheerfully, as her bucket went clattering down the well; "we've had a good drop to-year, haven't we? Farmers may grumble, but, as I do say, 'tis good for the well. We'll be like to draw a bit less chalk nor we do in the dry seasons. There be all sarts in our well, bain't there? Water an' chalk, and a good few snails. There, when I do hear folks a-talkin' about the Government doin' this an' doin' that, I do say to myself I wish Government 'ud see to our well."

Usually such a sally would have been applauded, but, to poor old Ann's astonishment and chagrin, her remark was received on this occasion in solemn silence. To hide her discomfiture she peered into the moss-grown depths of the well.

"Don't ye go a-lookin' into it like that, Ann," cried a vinegary-faced matron in an aggressive tone. "Chalky water, e-es, an' water wi' snails in't is better than no water at all. 'Tis sure—'tis by a long ways."

"Ah, 'tis!" agreed the others, eyeing Ann suspiciously.

She straightened herself and looked round in surprise.

"I never said it wasn't," she faltered. "Why do ye look at me so nasty, Mrs. Biles?"

"Oh, ye don't know, I s'pose?" retorted Mrs. Biles, sourly.

"How be your 'taters, Ann Kerley, this mornin'?"

"Doin' finely, thanks be," said poor Ann, brightening up, as she considered the conversation was taking a more agreeable turn.

"Not blighted, I s'pose?" put in a little fat woman who had hitherto been silent.

"Not a sign o' blight about 'em," said Mrs. Kerley, joyfully.

"There, I did just chance to look at 'em when I did first get up, an' they're beautiful."

"That's strange," remarked Mrs. Biles, with a meaning sniff. "Every single 'tater at the 'lotments be blighted, they do tell I. There, Mrs. Pilcher did say when her husband went up there this mornin' he could smell 'em near a quarter of a mile away."

"Dear, to be sure!" groaned Ann, sympathetically, being quite willing to condone any little asperities of temper on the part of folks suffering from such a calamity. "'Tis a terrible pity, Mrs. Biles. There, 'tis along o' the 'lotments layin' out so open like, I d' 'low. Now my bit o' garden be sheltered."

The little fat woman, usually a meek sort of body, snorted fiercely.

"Tisn't very likely as your garden 'ud suffer, Mrs. Kerley," she cried, in a voice that trembled with wrath. "Your garden is safe enough—an' so was the 'lotments till yesterday."

"Well, I be pure sorry, I'm sure," said Ann, looking from one to the other in bewilderment. "'Tis just as luck would have it, I s'pose."

"Luck, indeed!" cried Mrs. Biles meaningly. "There's them as went by yesterday as wished bad luck, an' bad luck did come."

Ann fairly gasped. Mrs. Biles threw out her hand warningly.

"Take your eyes off I, Mrs. Kerley. Take 'em off, I say! I bain't a-goin' to have 'ee overlookin' of I, same as you did do to poor Joe Pilcher—'tis well if the poor bwoy don't die of it."

Ann obediently dropped her eyes, a nightmare-like sensation of oppression overwhelming her.

"I d' 'low ye won't deny ye did overlook Joe Pilcher," went on Mrs. Biles; "there, ye did no sooner turn your back yesterday, nor the lad was took wi' sich a bad pain in his innards that he went all doubley up same as a wold man."

"Well, that's none o' my fault," expostulated Ann warmly, for even a worm will turn. "He've a-been 'eatin' summat as disagreed wi' he."

"Nothin' o' the kind!" cried the women in chorus.

"It comed so sharp as a knife," added one, "all twisty turny."

"The poor bwoy did lie upon the floor all night," put in another, "a-pankin' and a-groanin' so pitiful. 'Ann Kerley has bewitched I,' says he. E-es, the bwoy come out wi' the truth. 'Tis Mother Kerley what has overlooked I,' says he."

"Well," returned Ann, vehemently, "I never did nothin' at all to the bwoy. 'Tis nonsense what you do talk, all on you. He've a-been eatin' green apples—that's what's the matter wi' he."

"Green apples!" exclaimed Mrs. Biles, with shrill sarcasm. "Dear, to be sure, if a bwoy was to be upset every time he ate a green apple, there wouldn't be a sound child in village. He hadn't had above five or six, his mother did say herself, an' he can put away as many as fourteen wi'out feelin' the worse for it. Ye must agree 'tis very strange, Ann—there, ye did say out plain for all to hear. 'Bad luck, yourself,' says you to the innocent bwoy. 'Ye won't be like to have such very good luck, nar'n o' you,' says you, an', sure enough, there be the 'taters blighted, an' there be the poor bwoy upset in's inside."

"I didn't really mean it, neighbours," faltered Ann, looking piteously round. "I was a bit vexed at the time, an' when the lads did start a-floutin' me wi' stones an' that, and a-callin' ill names and a-wishin' me bad luck, I just says back to 'em, quick like, 'Bad luck, yourself!' an' 'twasn't very like they'd have good luck; but I didn't mean it in my heart—not me, indeed. The Lard sees I hadn't no thought o' really wishin' evil to nobody—that I hadn't, neighbours. You don't believe I did have, do 'ee now, Mrs. Whittle?"—turning in despair to the little woman on her right—"you, what has knowed I sich a many year—you did ought to know I wouldn't wish no harm to nobody."

Mrs. Whittle looked sheepish and uncomfortable. Despite the sinister aspect of things, her heart melted at her old crony's appeal.

"Why, I scarce can believe it," she was beginning, when Mrs. Biles struck in.

"Deny it if ye can, Ann Kerley. There's the 'taters blighted, an' there's the bwoy took bad, an' it's you what wished 'em ill luck. What can ye make o' that, Mrs. Whittle? Ye'll 'low 'tis strange."

Mrs. Whittle shook her head dubiously, and Ann, deprived, as she thought, of her only ally, threw her apron over her head, and wept behind it.

"Don't 'ee take on, Mrs. Kerley, that's a dear," said Mrs. Whittle, softening once more. "'Twas maybe a chance thing. You did say them words wi'out thinkin', an' they did come true to be a warnin' to 'ee. We do all do wrong sometimes; this 'ere did ought to be a warnin' to all on us."

"I'm sure 'twill be a lesson to I," sobbed Ann, inarticulately. "There, so long as I do live I'll never say such things again. 'Twas very ill-done o' me to ha' spoke wi'out thought, sich a wold 'ooman as I be, an' so near my end an' all, an' the Lard has chastised I. I can't do more nor say I'm sorry, an' I hope the A'mighty 'ull forgive me."

"There, the 'ooman can't say no fairer nor that," said Mrs. Whittle, looking round appealingly; "she can't do more nor repent."

"Oh, if she do repent it 'll be well enough," said Mrs. Biles, darkly. "'Tis to be hoped as she do repent. But by all accounts 'tis easier for to begin that kind o' work nor to leave it off again."

She turned on her heel with this parting innuendo, and, taking up her full bucket, walked away. The others followed suit, and Ann, left alone, sobbed on for a moment or two with a feeling akin to despair, and then, drawing down her apron, wiped her eyes with it sadly, wound up her pail from the depths where it had lain forgotten, and made her way homewards.

For days afterwards she was ashamed to show her face, and rose at extraordinarily early hours in order to procure her supply of water, and crept out of her own quarters at dusk to make her necessary purchases.

One morning, about a week after the affair at the allotments, when Ann sallied forth as usual for water, she paused incidentally to look over her neighbour's gate. The hen-coop was still in view, the hen cackling, and the ducklings waddling up and down the path. But how few of them there were! Only three! What could have become of the others? Possibly they were squatting at the back of the coop. She was craning her head round in order to ascertain if this were the case, when a window in Mrs. Clarke's house was thrown open, and that lady's voice was heard in angry tones.

"I've caught you at it, have I? I've caught you at it! Well, you did ought to be ashamed of yourself, Ann Kerley. To try an' do me a mischief—me, as has been sich a good neighbour to 'ee."

"Why, what's the matter?" returned Ann, backing away from the gate, and raising dim, distracted eyes.

"I've caught you in the very act," continued Mrs. Clarke, vehemently. "Says I to myself when the ducklin's kep' a-droppin' off like that, 'I wonder if it can be Ann?' says I, an' then I thinks, 'No, it never can be Ann; her an' me was always friends,' I says. Ah, you ungrateful, spiteful creetur'!"

An arm, clad in checked flannelette, was here thrust forth, and the fist appertaining thereto emphatically shaken.

"I'm sure," protested the unfortunate Ann, staggering back against her own little gate, "I don't know whatever you can mean by such talk, Mrs. Clarke; I never touched your ducks. I be a honest 'ooman, an' I wouldn't take nothin' what didn't belong to I."

"I don't say you stole 'em," retorted Mrs. Clarke, "but I say you overlooked 'em, an' that's worse; a body 'ud know what to be at if 'twas only a thief as was makin' away wi' 'em, but when 'tis a witch—Lard, whatever is to be done! I couldn't ha' thought ye'd ha' found it in your heart to go strikin' down they poor little innocent things! What harm did they do ye? Sich beauties as they was. But there, ye must go gettin' up in the very dummet that ye mid overlook the poor little creetur's, so that, one after another, they do just croopy down and die."

"Mrs. Clarke," said Anne, solemnly and desperately, "I

can't tell how sich a thing did come about—I can't indeed. 'Tis no fault o' mine, I do assure ye. I wouldn't ha' had they poor little duck die for anything. I never wished 'em ill. I was admirin' of 'em. I never had no other thought."

"Well, see here," returned Mrs. Clarke, somewhat mollified. "Don't ye look at 'em at all, that's a good 'ooman. Maybe 'tis no fault o' yourn, but 'tis very strange, Mrs. Kerley, what do seem to have come to you to-year. You do seem to bring bad luck, though you midn't do it a-purpose."

"I'm sure I don't," protested Ann, "an' I can't believe, Mrs. Clarke, as a body can do bad wi'out knowin' it."

"Well, 'tis queer, I d' 'low," agreed her neighbour, "but when a body sees sich things for theirsels as do happen along o' you, they can't but believe their own eyes. Ye mind that there bar-hive what Mr. Bridle got last month?"

"E-es," returned Ann, feebly, "I mind it well. I never see sich a handsome contrivance nor so clever. Mr. Bridle showed it to I."

"E-es, I d' 'low he did," agreed the other, with a certain triumph. "I d' 'low ye was a-lookin' at it a long time."

"I was," confessed Ann, with a sinking heart.

Mrs. Clarke nodded portentously. "That's it," she said. "The bees be all dead, Mrs. Kerley. Bridle, he did say to I yesterday, 'I couldn't think,' says he, 'whatever took the bees. I had but just moved them out of the wold skip and they did seem to take to the bar-hive so nice,' he says, 'an' now they be all a-dyin' off so quick as they can. I couldn't think,' he says, 'what could be the reason, but I do know now. I do know 'twas a great mistake to ha' brought Ann Kerley up to look at 'em.'"

"Oh dear, oh dear," cried the last-named poor old woman, wringing her hands, "do he really think I did hurt 'em?"

"He do indeed," said Mrs. Clarke firmly. "There, my dear, it do seem a terr'ble thing, but you be turned into a witch seemin'ly, whether it be against your will or whether it bain't."

Ann stood motionless for a moment, her hands squeezed tightly together, her face haggard and drawn.

"I think I'll go indoor a bit," she said after a pause. "I'll go indoor an' set me down. I don't know what to do. Mrs. Clarke?"

"E-es, my dear. There, you needn't look up at I so earnest—I can hear 'ee quite well wi'out that."

Ann turned away with an impatient groan, and went staggering up her path. The other looked after her remorsefully.

"Bide a bit, Mrs. Kerley, do 'ee now. What was ye goin' to ax I?"

"I was but goin' to ax," faltered Ann, still with her face averted, "if you'd be so kind as to fetch I a drop o' water this mornin' when you do go to get some for yoursel'. There, I don't some way feel as if I could clace folks—an' there may be some about. 'Tis gettin' a bit late now."

"E-es, sure; I could do it easy," agreed Mrs. Clarke, eagerly. "I could do it every mornin'—'tisn't a bit more trouble to fill two pails nor one. An' 't'ud be better for 'ee, Ann, my dear, not to go about more nor you can help till this 'ere visitation wears off."

"'T'ull never wear off," said Ann gloomily, as she walked unsteadily away.

Now, as Mrs. Clarke subsequently remarked, those words of Ann's made her fair bibber, same as if a bucket of cold water were thrown down her back. She was full of compassion for her neighbour, and, though she was willing to believe that the strange, unpleasant power of which she had suddenly become possessed was unwelcome to her and unconsciously used, she was nevertheless forced to agree with Mrs. Biles that that didn't make the thing no better, and that the more Ann Kerley kept herself to herself, the safer it would be for all parties.

Meanwhile the anguish of mind endured by the unwilling sorceress defies description. Day by day her deplorable plight became more evident to her. Now an indignant farmer's wife would come to complain that butter had not come, and on poor Ann's protesting that she had never so much as set foot near the dairy, would retort that she had been seen gathering sticks at nightfall in the pasture, and had doubtless bewitched the cows. Now a village mother would hastily snatch up a child when it toddled towards the witch's house; even the baker tossed the weekly loaf over the gate in fear, and left his bill at Mrs. Clarke's, saying he would call for the money there. That lady informed her of the fact through the closed door as she dumped her morning bucket of water on the path without, adding that if she would like to leave the money in the bucket when she put it ready overnight, it would save trouble to everyone.

Ann Kerley understood: even her old crony was now afraid to meet her face to face.

As she realised this she fell to crying feebly and hopelessly, as she had done so often of late, and Pussy came and jumped upon her knee, rubbing herself against her, and gazing at her with golden inscrutable eyes. The warm contact of a living creature, even a cat, was comforting, and the old woman hugged her favourite closely; but presently, struck by a sudden thought, she pushed it away, and turned aside her head.

"There! get down, love! do—get away with 'ee, else I'll maybe be doin' thee a mischief. Oh dear, Puss, whatever should I do if anything happened to thee?"

The idea positively appalled her, and from that moment she was careful to avert her face when she set the cat's food before her.

Perhaps the greatest trial of all was the Sunday church-going.

"I d' 'low the Lard won't let I do nobody no harm in His house," she had said to herself at first, almost hopefully; and she had donned her decent Sunday clothes eagerly, not to say joyfully. She was by nature sociable, and had suffered as severely from the inability to indulge in an occasional chat, a little harmless gossip, with this one and that one, as from a sense of being under a ban.

So she had set forth cheerily, volunteering "A fine mornin', neighbours," to the first group she had passed upon the road. But dear, to be sure! how the folks had jumped and squeezed themselves against the wall to let her go by! She had not had the heart to greet the next couple, staid elderly folk, who were pacing along in front of her, full of Sabbath righteousness; but presently the man had looked round, and had then nudged his wife, and she had gathered up her skirts and scuttled on without so much as a glance over her shoulder. Poor Ann had fallen back and turned aside into a by-path until all the congregation had streamed in, and then had crept up the steps alone, and made her way to her place blindly, for her eyes were full once more of piteous tears.

But even there humiliation awaited her, for she found herself alone in her pew, none of its accustomed occupants being willing to worship in such dangerous proximity.

"I must be a terr'ble wicked 'ooman, sure," groaned Ann to herself, and raised her poor smarting eyes to the east window, whence the figure of the Good Shepherd looked back at her, full of compassion and benignity.

But Ann quickly dropped her eyes again. Was He not carrying a lamb upon His shoulder? It seemed to her that even the painted innocent would droop and falter beneath her gaze.

And so thenceforth she started for church long after the other members of the congregation, and instead of seeking her own place, stole humbly to a dark corner, where, hidden away behind a pillar, she worshipped in much sorrow of heart.

Such a state of things could not have continued if the old Rector had been at home, but he was away holiday-making in Switzerland, and the *locum tenens*, a young curate from the neighbouring town, could not be expected to notice a matter of the kind.

One Sunday afternoon it chanced that Farmer Joyce, who lived up Riverton way, drove over to Little Branstons, and was good enough to give a lift to his neighbour, Martha Hansford, Ann's married daughter, who was feeling, as she confessed, a bit anxious at not hearing from her mother.

"There, she haven't a-wrote since I can't say when," she explained to the farmer, as the trap went spinning along the road; "she don't write herself, mother don't, but she do generally get somebody to drop me a line for her, and I haven't heard a word to-month; no, nor last month either."

"Rheumatics, perhaps," suggested the farmer.

"I'm sure I hope not, Mr. Joyce. My mother have never had sich a thing in her life, an' 'tis to be hoped she bain't a-goin' to begin now."

"The wold lady's busy, very like," hazarded Mr. Joyce, after ruminating a while. "There, the time do slip away so quick, an' one day do seem so like another, folks can't always be expected to put their minds to letter-writin'."

"Lard love 'ee, sir," returned Martha, startled into familiarity, "farmer folks mid be busy enough, an' lab'rins' folks too—I can scarce find the day long enough to put in all as I've a-got to do—but mother! what can a poor wold body like mother have to work at, wi'out it's a bit o' knittin', or some such thing. No, it's summat else, an' I'm sure I can't think what it can be."

Mr. Joyce was not imaginative enough to assist her by any further hypotheses; therefore, he merely touched up the horse and remarked reassuringly that they would soon be there. And for the rest of the drive Martha devoted herself to the somewhat difficult task of keeping her three-year-old boy Ally from wriggling out of her arms.

Dropped at the bottom of the "dip" wherein was situated Mrs. Kerley's cottage, Martha hastened towards it, Ally trotting gleefully beside her. Instead of finding the cottage door open—as might have been expected this sunny October afternoon—and catching a glimpse of her mother's quiet figure in its elbow-chair, she found the house shut up, and apparently no sign of life about the place. The very garden had a neglected look, or so it seemed to her; and the little window, usually gay with flowers, was blank and desolate, the check curtain within being drawn across it.

"Mother!" cried Martha, in a tone of such anguish that Ally immediately set up a corresponding wail. "Oh mother! whatever is to do? Be you dead? Oh, mother! be you dead?"

To her intense relief she heard the sound of a chair being pushed back over the flagged floor within, and her mother's well-known step slowly cross the little kitchen.

"Martha! be it you, my dear?" But she did not open the door, and when Martha eagerly tried the latch she found that it did not yield.

"Mother, mother," she cried in an agony of fear, "oh, mother, what is it? Why don't ye let I in?"

"I can't, my dear," came the tremulous voice from within. "No, don't ax it of I. I dursen't, Martha! There, I mid do 'ee a mischief."

"Mother, what be talkin' on?" Martha was beginning incredulously, when her small son, impatient of the delay, fairly drowned her voice with shrill clamour for admittance, and vigorous kicking of his little hobnailed boots at the panels of the door. Martha snatched him up and impatiently clapped her hand over the protesting mouth. In the momentary pause that ensued she heard her mother weeping.

"Be that Ally? Oh, my blessed lamb! Oh, dear heart! Oh, oh!" Then in a louder key came the words broken by sobs: "Take en away, Martha, do—take en away, lovey! Somethin' bad might happen else!"

Here Ally, wrenching himself free, burst into a roar of indignation, and his mother, popping him down on the ground, threw herself upon the door, and, exerting all her strength, succeeded in bursting it open.

With a wail Ann shrank away from her into the furthest corner of the room, hiding her face against the wall.

"Don't ye come anigh me, Martha, don't ye—don't ye! And take the blessed child away! Take him away this minute!"

"I'll do nothin' o' the kind," returned Martha, vehemently. "Be you gone crazy, mother? Whatever is the matter?"

"Nay, my dear, I bain't gone crazy—it be worse, a deal worse. I can't tell however it did come about, Martha, but, there, I be turned into a witch. I be evil-eyed, they d' say! There, ye'd never believe the terr'ble things what have a-come about along o' me jist lookin'."

Martha dropped down in a chair and burst out laughing. She was a hale, hearty young woman, who had had a bit of schooling, and took a sane and cheerful view of life.

"God bless us, mother!" she cried, wiping her eyes at last and springing up, "what put such a notion as that in your head? You a witch! You hurtin' things wi' lookin' at 'em! I never did hear such nonsense-talk in my life!"

"But it be true, Martha—it be true!" returned Ann, still hiding her face in her trembling hands. "There, I've seed it myself. Don't you come too nigh, my dear, and for mercy's sake keep the darlin' child away!"

"Nay, but I won't," retorted Martha; and, catching up the child, she advanced with a determined air. "You shall look at us—both of us—that you shall! Kiss grandma, Ally, love—that's it! Pull away her hands, and give her a big hug. There, the mischief's done now, if mischief there be. Bain't he growed, grandma? Bain't he a fine boy? There, come an' sit ye down and take en on your knee and feel the weight of en."

Ann could not withstand the spell of the little clinging arms, the kisses rained upon her withered cheek. She suffered the child to climb from his mother's arms into hers, and hugged him back passionately.

"Bless you, my lamb! Bless you, my darlin' little angel! Dear, but he be a fine boy, Martha. Bless you, love! E-es; grandma 'ull find en a lump o' sugar. Ah, Martha, I be a-feared—it do seem a terr'ble risk; but, there, I can't think but what the Lard 'ull purtect the innercent child."

"Now, you come along, mother, and sit ye down, an' don't ye go so trembly. You'll not hurt Ally; he be a deal more like to hurt you, such a mischievous boy as he be. Now, then, whoever has been frightenin' of ye with such talk?"

"My dear, they do all say it," murmured Ann, looking fearfully round.

Brokenly, and with many digressions, she told her tale. Long before she had ended Martha was weeping too—weeping

with indignation and with a sense of despair; for, argue as she might, she could not divest her mother of her persuasion in her own fell powers. If Ann herself could not be convinced of the folly of the supposition, what hope could Martha have to do away with the unjust suspicions of the neighbours?

Each fresh proof of the ostracism which had become her mother's portion added to her wrath and woe. She had not had a bit of meat to her dinner, as was invariably the case on Sunday, not having dared to venture forth to buy it. There was not so much as a drop of milk in the house, the child who usually brought it having declined to perform that office. Ann had not liked even to go out and get herself a few "spuds"—there were so many folks about on Saturdays, she explained. There was no fire in the grate, though the autumn day was sharp, for Farmer Cosser had "dared" her to pick up any more sticks in his field.

"I d' 'low ye'd ha' been dead afore long, if I hadn't ha' come," cried Martha, and then fell a-sobbing again. What was the use of her having come? What good could she do?

The two women were sitting together in very melancholy mood, when Farmer Joyce called to say that he would hitch the horse at six o'clock, and Martha must meet him at the top of the road.

"Hullo!" he cried, breaking off short at sight of their tearful faces, "be you all a-cryin' in here?"

And then Martha, eager for sympathy, made bold to clutch at his stout arm and pour forth her tale. The farmer, leaning against the door-post, listened at first in amusement, afterwards with an indignation almost equal to the daughter's own.

"I never did hear such a thing!" he cried, emphatically, as she paused for breath. "They must be a pack o' sammies in this place—and wicked uns, too. Dear heart alive! they've fair gallied the poor wold 'ooman out of her wits. Be there anyone about? I'll soon show 'em what I think of 'em."

"There's a good few folks just goin' their ways to church," cried Martha, eagerly pointing up the lane.

"Then I'll step up and give 'em a bit o' my mind," returned he. "You come along wi' I, Mrs. Kerley—don't ye stop for to



F. A. Swaine.

EVENSING.

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put on your bonnet—throw this 'ere 'ankercher over your cap—else we'll not be in time to catch 'em maybe."

"No, I dursten't do that," protested Ann, plucking away the handkerchief which he had thrown over her head; "'twas that which did first start the notion. 'Twas a windy day, d'ye see, an' I was goin' to pick a bit o' scroff, an' I just tied my handkercher round my head—an' when the bwoys did see I, they did pelt I wi' stones and call I witch."

"Young rascals!" ejaculated the farmer, who had by this time hauled her out of the house, and was hurrying with her up the lane. "Come on, Martha! Make haste, 'ooman! There be a lot of 'em yonder."

In a few moments he and the breathless women found themselves in the midst of quite a little crowd, for Farmer Joyce had waylaid the first group he came across, and the sound of his stentorian tones, raised in wrathful accusation, speedily summoned others.

"You be a wise lot here, you be!" he cried; "you do know summat, you do. Tell 'ee what—you be the biggest lot o' stunn-polls as ever was seed or heerd on. This be your witch, be it?—thikky poor wold 'ooman what have never done anybody a bit o' harm in her life—poor wold Ann Kerley what was born and bred here, and did get married to a Little Branstion man an' all, and what have lived among ye so quiet an' peaceful as a body could do. Why, look at her! Look at the poor wold frightened face of her; d'ye mean for to tell I that's the face of a witch?"

"Well, she did blight our 'taters," growled somebody.

"An' she did overlook Mrs. Clarke's duck——"

"Did she?" retorted Farmer Joyce, sarcastically. "Well, she didn't overlook my young duck, and they be dead—the most on 'em—what do ye make o' that? Did ye never hear, you wise folk, as duckling do mostly die in thunder weather? And I'll warrant you be too wise hereabouts to have heerd that this be a blight-year. A lot o' my 'taters be blighted——"

"I'm sure," put in poor Martha, eagerly, "our 'taters be blighted too. There, my husband do say 'tis scarce worth while to get 'em up."

"I s'pose," cried Farmer Joyce, looking round with withering sarcasm, "I s'pose this 'ere witch have a-gone and wished ill-luck to her own darter's 'taters. 'Tis very likely, I'm sure. And there's another thing—I did hear some tale o' bees a-dyin' arter they'd a-been put in a new hive."

"That's true enough," "'Tis true, sure," came one or two voices in reply, not with any great enthusiasm, however; then a man's sullen tones—" 'Tis so true as anything. They was my bees, an' I can answer for't bein' true."

"How much food did ye put in for 'em when ye did shift 'em?" enquired Joyce, fixing his eyes on the speaker.

"How much food? I d'low bees be like to keep theirselves."

"Not when you do take their store off 'em so late in the season. You've a-killed your own bees, good man; they were too weak, d'ye see, to keep wosses off when they did come a-fightin' of 'em. I'd a-thought you'd a-been clever enough to a-knowned that, seein' what knowin' folks you be in Little Branstion. There, you did know poor wold Mrs. Kerley tied her 'ankercher over her head to make herself a witch—'twas that what made her a witch, weren't it? Now I be a witch, baint I?" He whisked off his hat suddenly, and drawing a cotton handkerchief from his pocket threw it over his head and tied the ends beneath his chin. The sight of his large red face with its fringe of grey whisker looking jubilantly out of the red and yellow folds, was irresistibly comic; the bystanders fairly roared. The farmer was quick to follow up his advantage.

"I must be a witch," he persisted, "seein' as I've a-got a witch's head on"; then, seized by a yet more luminous inspiration, he crowned the meek and trembling Ann Kerley with his own broad-brimmed and shaggy beaver.

"Now, Mrs. Kerley be a farmer. She must be a farmer, sure, for she be a-wearin' a farmer's hat. There, there be jist so much sense in the one notion as the t'other. Here we be—Farmer Kerley and Witch Joyce!"

The merriment at this point grew so uproarious that the clergyman in his distant vestry very nearly sallied forth to enquire the cause, but it died away as suddenly as it had begun. The sight of poor old Ann's lined face looking patiently out from beneath its ridiculous headgear was, on the whole, more pathetic than ludicrous; folks began to look at each other, and to own to themselves that they had been not only foolish, but cruel. Every word that the farmer spoke had carried weight, and he could have employed no more forcible argument than the practical demonstration at the end. He was the very best advocate who could have been chosen to plead for her—a good, plain man, like themselves, who thoroughly understood the case. By the time Farmer Joyce had resumed his hat and restored his handkerchief to his pocket, the cause was won. People had gathered round Ann with rough apologies and kindly handshakes, and she was escorted homewards by more than one long-estranged friend.

When little Ally, who had been asleep on the settle, woke at the sound of the approaching voices, and came trotting out of

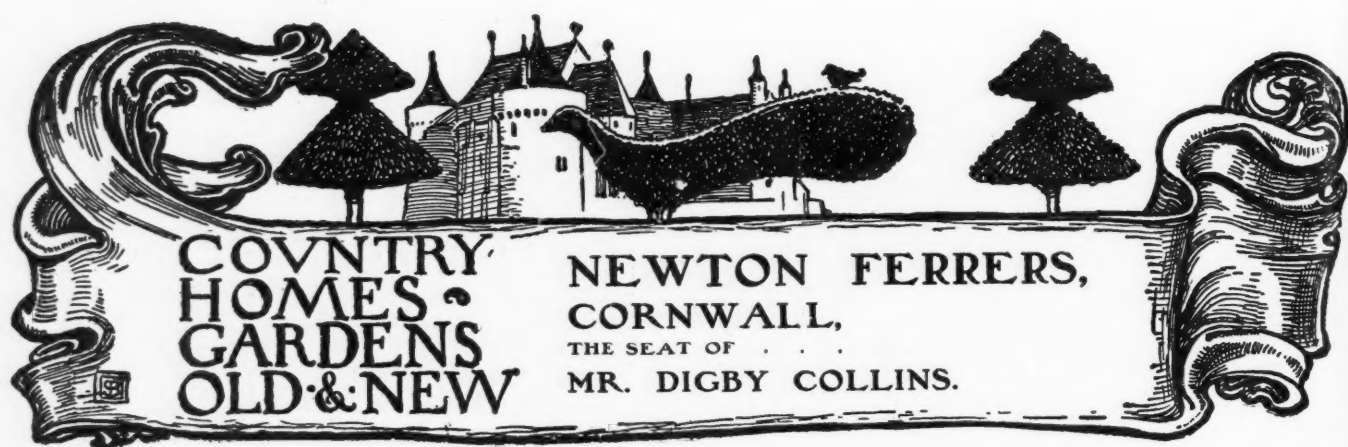
the banned house, rubbing his eyes and calling loudly for "Grandma," the good women nodded to each other meaningly, and said that he was a fine boy, bless him, and he wouldn't be likely to look so well if—— And then somebody sniffed the air, and observed that he shouldn't wonder but what Mrs. Kerley's 'taters was a bit blighted too, and Mrs. Kerley replied that she was sure they mid be, but she didn't know, for she hadn't had the heart to look. And then the expert returned authoritatively that he was quite sure they was done for, which seemed wonderfully satisfactory to all parties.

And then Farmer Joyce bethought him that it was time to hitch the horse, and the rest of Ann's friends remembered that "last bell" would soon ha' done ringing; so gradually the little crowd melted away, and Martha embraced her mother with a thankful heart, and went away likewise, leaving Ally behind, according to the farmer's advice, who had reminded her in a gruff whisper that the little chap would be more like to take off the wold body's mind from that there queer notion nor anything else.

So the little house, which had been so desolate a few hours before, was now restored to homely joy and peace; and when Martha looked back from the summit of the lane, she saw her mother standing, all smiles, in the open doorway, shading her eyes from the sun, which was making a glory round the curly head of the little child in her arms.

THE SPRING RUN OF SALMON.

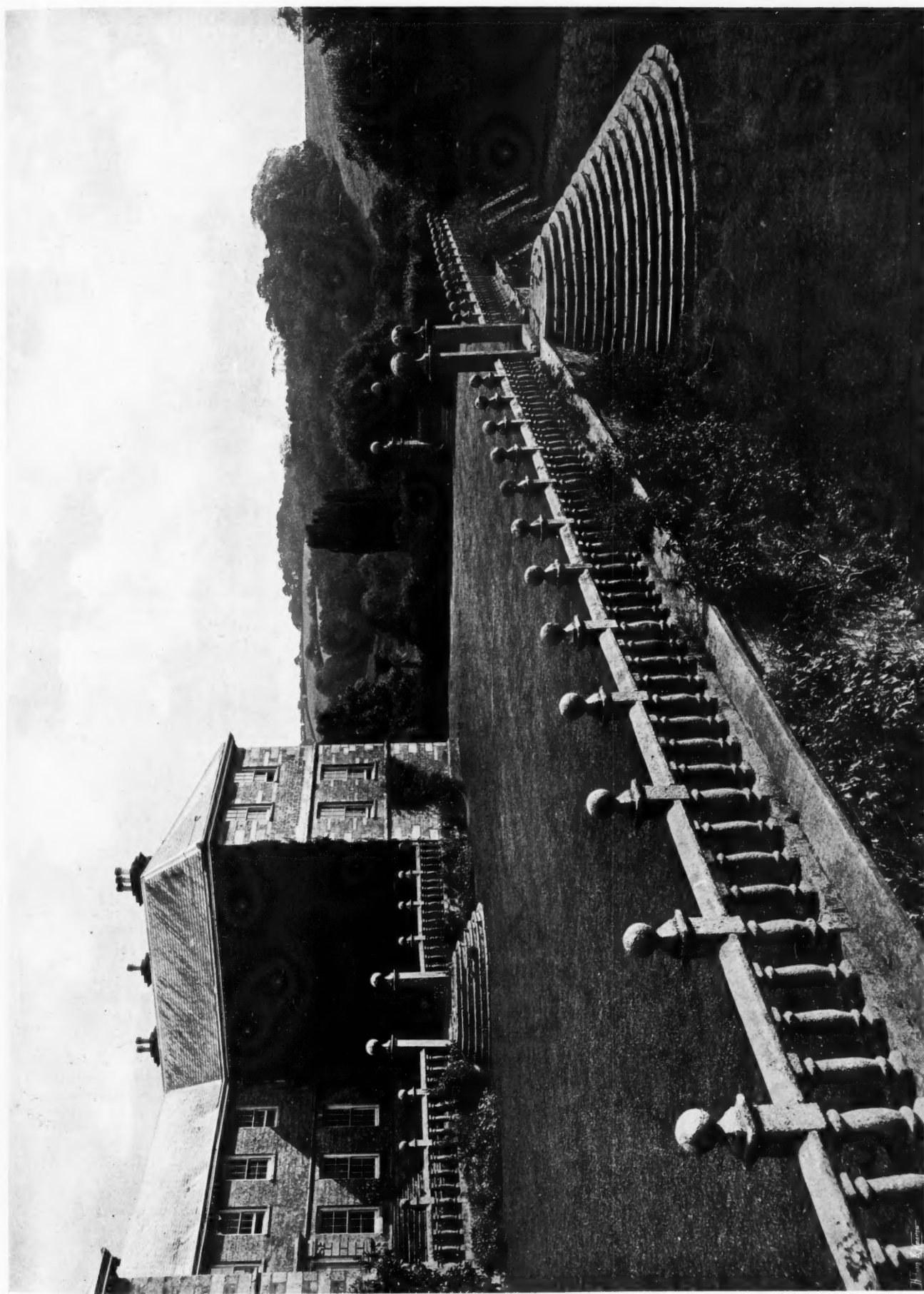
WE all presume that the salmon's object in entering the river is to spawn, to propagate his species. It is a most praiseworthy purpose; but though this is undoubtedly the purpose of the salmon that enter the rivers in the autumn, it is not proved at all so conclusively to be the object of those that come up in the spring. We have to wonder, indeed, not a little why those fish do thus run up in the spring. It is difficult to prove a negative, but in this regard the negative seems fairly well established, that the fish which come up in the spring do not go to the beds and spawn. Indeed, an examination of them when caught shows that they are not in any condition to do so. Granted then that they do not spawn in the spring, is it to be supposed that they hang about in the fresh water all the summer and spawn at the regular time, in the autumn? That again is hardly to be believed—that fish would go on living in conditions under which, as we know, they feed very little, if at all, and at the end of several months of such life should ascend the stream to the spawning-beds. Such a supposition is opposed to all that we know of the effect on salmon of a sojourn in fresh water. What then do these fish do? Do they go down again to the sea without spawning? Probably we may regard it as fairly certain that the majority, at all events, do. And at what time of year then do they make this return journey? Do they hang about in the fresh water until they get stale and red, or do they go down at once, or at some early date, to recruit their energies in the salt water? Probably we may take it that while a few do remain in the rivers until they get very red, the majority of them go back again to the sea about the height of the summer. This is rather a bold conjecture to make, for few people seem disposed to agree with it; but surely it is the fact on many rivers that there are often plenty of spring-run fish about up to July, but that at some such date they very generally disappear. It is a time at which the water usually is low, so that fish, if they are there, are easily seen. As said before, a negative is hard to prove, but it is fairly certain that a general disappearance of spring-run fish does take place in the summer, and it is a natural inference that they go down again to the sea. If all this be granted, are we to suppose that these fish return, with recuperated forces, and join in the autumnal ascent of the rivers, or are we to suppose, rather, that they do not return the same season at all, but only the next, or the one after that, maybe? If we are to accept the latter supposition, it would seem that the influx of salmon into our rivers in the spring is an absolute evil, regarded from the point of view of the ultimate good of the stock in the river, rather than a good, as we all would so much more readily believe. The truth, however, is that we still know but little, and the men who ought to know the most are the least disposed to speak dogmatically. One fact that is curious, in regard to the whole question of the ascent of rivers by salmon, is that there are many falls and runs that are easier of ascent by small fish than by big. Where it is a question of sheer height of leaping, the big fellows no doubt have an advantage; but where, as often happens, there is a thin sheet of water, say 3in. or 4in. in depth only, rushing over a smooth surface of moderate gradient, there you may see the small fish working their way up by sheer steady swimming, and succeeding in reaching the top, whereas the bigger fish fail in the same attempt because they have not the requisite depth of water to give their swimming abilities full play.



THIS house of unusual, and of pleasing and interesting, aspect is situated at Newton Ferrers, on the river Lynher, within some three miles of the old town of Callington in Cornwall. The locality should, perhaps, strictly be spoken of as West Newton Ferrers, for there is a parish of the same name in Devonshire, about seven miles

from Plymouth. Both of these pleasant West Country places are Newtons, and both of them take their suffix from the great family of Ferrers. We do not know exactly when Mr. Collins's house was built, but it seems to belong to the early eighteenth century, and has a solid and substantial style, which seems appropriate to the westernmost county, and that derives something of its





"COUNTRY LIFE."

THE TERRACES.

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A CLASSIC LEAD FIGURE.

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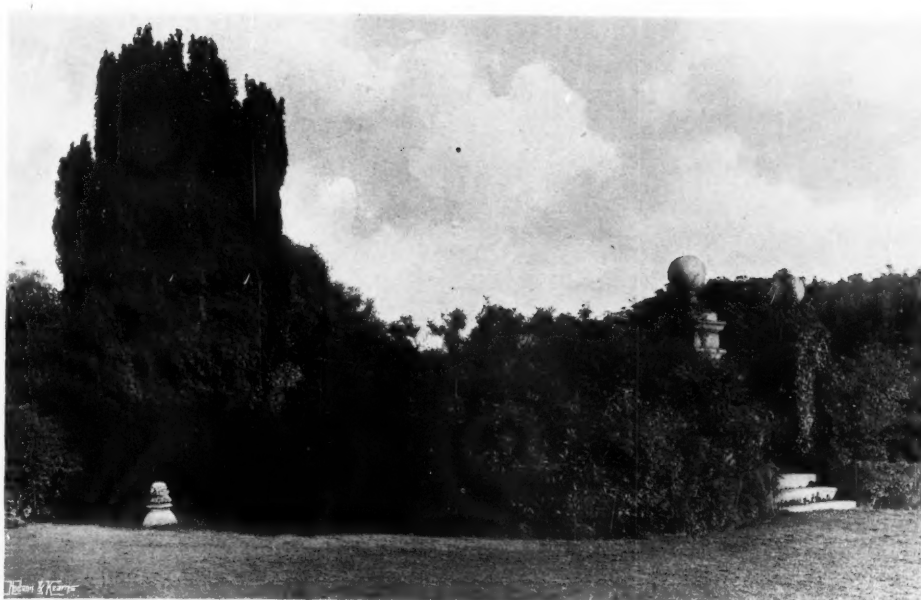
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THE OLD ENTRANCE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

character from the hard granite of which the structure is built. There was doubtless a house here in earlier times, in which a stock or stem of the house of Ferrers resided, until, in 1314, Isolda, daughter and heiress of John de Ferrers, married John Coryton, whose family had derived its name from a place some eight miles north of Tavistock in Devonshire.

For centuries the house and manor of Newton Ferrers belonged to this family, which did not become extinct in the male line until 1739. The Corytons made no great mark upon history, but William Coryton, son of Peter Coryton of Newton Ferrers, was a prominent politician in the time of Charles I. and the Commonwealth. He was Vice-Warden of the Stannaries in 1603, and was elected to represent his county in Parliament in 1623, his spirit being sturdy and strongly opposed to the policy of the King. He objected to the forced loan of 1627, and was arrested and lodged in the Fleet prison, where he remained some months, being released in view of the opening of Parliament. In the next year he was again returned, and spoke in the debate on tonnage and poundage, though his attitude was studiously moderate. He was, nevertheless, involved in difficulties, and,



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AN IRISH YEW.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

being present when Speaker Finch refused to put to the House a remonstrance on the subject, made by Sir John Eliot, followed by the laying of violet hands upon the Speaker by Denzil Holles and others, he was implicated, and charged with having aided and abetted. Coryton was summoned before the Star Chamber, but refused to plead, alleging the privilege of Parliament. He was committed to the Tower, but made submission, and was released and reinstated in his offices in the Stannary Court.

He got into other difficulties later on, but his son, John Coryton of Newton, who also showed a strong spirit against the Crown at one time, was received into favour, and raised to the baronetage in February, 1661-62. He represented Cornwall—Callington and Launceston—at various times in Parliament, and died in 1680. His two sons, John and William, followed him in his title and possessions, and the younger of them, Sir William, who was three times married, had for his third wife a lady somewhat advanced in years, who, however, was the rich widow of a rich goldsmith and banker of Lombard Street. He left a son, who succeeded to the title in 1711, but died childless, and his estate passed to his widow, Rachel; the daughter of William Helyar, a member of an old Cornish family.



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THE TERRACE, IN RICH RELIEF.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE GARDEN COURT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Newton House and other property remained with the Helyar family until one of its members, wishing to concentrate his possessions in Somerset, sold Newton Ferrers to a Cornish gentleman, Mr. Edward Collins, whose representative is the present proprietor. It deserves to be mentioned that the representatives of the Corytons in the female line recovered a considerable portion of the property from Dame Rachel, the widow of the last baronet, by action at law, and that the manor of Newton Ferrers is now the property of Mr. A. Coryton of Pentillie Castle, on the Tamar, in the same neighbourhood.

The house of Newton Ferrers stands finely in a pleasant situation upon the slope of a hill, with a very beautiful outlook across the country and the river below. There are woods and fields and shadowy lanes, and that general richness of vegetation which is so characteristic of that part of England. The spirit of the soil is in the place. The hard granite gives its individuality alike to the house and the garden. It is used even for the gate-posts in the fields, and it has a very quaint and beautiful effect in the old ball-topped and shield-adorned piers of the entrance gateway at Newton Ferrers House. The terracing on the garden side has a character all its own. In features singularly plain, in effect it is singularly good.

A flight of segmental steps leads down from the doorway to a level space of grass, with a stone pathway down the middle. At the outer edge of this frontage of grass runs the first line of balustrading from wing to wing of the house, thus making an enclosure of the hollow square. Ivy clothes with its dark vesture the grey granite of the walls in places, and the green things that love a rocky rootage are flourishing in the interstices of the stairway by which we descend. The balustrade is very beautiful in its severe simplicity, and is divided at intervals by squared terminals, each crested with a ball, while two taller pillars, each also with its globe, flank the way to the terrace below. Here, until recently, ivy grew rampantly, as it will when not judiciously thinned, to the concealment of

the architectural features. This strong and vigorous climber has a wonderful value in gardens; but it must be kept under control, and mere pruning only serves to make it grow thicker.

Descending now to the second level by another segmental stairway, we are better able to view the surroundings. There is a larger outlook, and we notice that the ground falls to the left into a hidden region of sylvan beauty, where the terrace walls are strongly buttressed. All is velvety turf now where we tread, and



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ACROSS THE BRIDGE TO NEWTON.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



FOOTSTEPS ON THE TURF.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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a delightful level platform does this terrace make for a walk when the birds are piping in the early mornings of summer, or in the evening, when the nightingale fills with melody the lovely valley from his station on the opposite hill. It is a scene of repose and beauty, and from this vantage point we may ascend on the right to a lovely flower garden on the hill. Here, again, on the terrace, the space of grass is margined by a balustrade like the last, which is a masterpiece of garden architecture in hard stone.

The style is quite unique, and the work is said to have been "done by an Italian," though the character is certainly germane to the soil. Fringing the terrace wall, and rooted in the stone, are flowering bushes and wall plants, lending a final charm. From this grass terrace we descend by another segmental flight, the grandest of them all, and floral like the rest, to the third level, to examine certain objects which, from above, have already aroused our curiosity. These are two admirable classic statues of solid lead, each upon a tall base of stone, soldiers both of them, in Roman panoply, one about to draw his sword, the other as if in the posture of throwing a dart, or with a weapon dropped from



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LEAVING NEWTON FERRERS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

his hand, and curiously twisted by the effect of age and sun. Often in these pages have we descanted upon the charms of old leadwork in our gardens, and when we find it in such curious shapes at Newton Ferrers it is doubly attractive. Far better than the gleaming white of marble in a garden like this is the harmonious hue of the lead, giving quaintness to these soldiers of old Rome, or it may be to Hector and Achilles in their encounter at the Scean Gate. Truly his progression downward from terrace to terrace through the

gardens of Newton Ferrers has a rare and singular fascination. There are terraces elsewhere, and even segmental stairs and leaden statues, but in few places is there so striking a combination.

Here is a garden that derives much of its endowment of beauty from its surroundings. On the height is the garden of flowers, radiant and fragrant all the summer long; clinging to the terrace walls is a wealth of beautiful things; below is a more wooded realm, entered between lofty gate-posts, with the attraction of water, and the old bridge on the way to Newton is a picturesque feature. Then the country hereabout is hilly, almost mountainous, very impressive in



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FINE BALUSTRADES.

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"COUNTRY LIFE."

THE THIRD STAIRWAY.

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character, with something even of grandeur, and it enframes the house at Newton Ferrers and its gardens in most lovely and harmonious fashion. This country of the Lynher and the Tamar is one of the most beautiful and interesting in the West of England. The Tamar may be traced, with increasing delight, upward from Saltash, by Pentillie Castle and Cotehele, to Morwell Rocks and the foot of Hingston Down; and the Lynher from the head of the Hamoaze to Newton Ferrers and the neighbourhood of Callington. The high road runs on the lofty hills between them from Saltash to the place last named, passing through St. Mellion, where is the church of St. Melanias, a picturesque edifice of Decorated and later times, containing the memorials of the Corytons of Newton Ferrers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the latest of them being that of Sir William Coryton, who died in 1711, a portly gentleman represented in a large lapelled coat, tightly buttoned, with a large, full-bottomed wig. To this gentleman, we believe, Newton Ferrers owes much of its earlier attractions.

LADIES' HOCKEY.

WITH the return of winter, sports and pastimes suitable for cold weather reappear, and among these sports the game of hockey takes a prominent place. The present season did not open as favourably as usual, on account of the very wet weather, and many of the clubs are in despair at the condition of their grounds. All over the country during the last few months rain has descended in torrents, not only exercising a depressing influence, but rendering the fields in several districts absolutely unfit for play.

The All-England Women's Hockey Association represents to the hockey world the same governing power and influence as the Ladies' Golf Union does in golf. It is the court of tribunal for all discussions of rules, etc. The meetings are attended by delegates from every county in England, and, in fact, it is the general fount of information on all matters connected with hockey, and the resource of all enquirers on the subject.

The association is in a most flourishing condition, and on going through the accounts at the last general meeting, a substantial balance of over £90 was found to be to its credit in the bank. This season, greatly to the regret of everyone, Miss Robson, who for the last seven years has so ably filled the responsible position of hon. secretary, declared her intention of resigning

her duties. The post is no sinecure, and means a great deal of work. Miss E. Lea Smith kindly consented to fill the vacant place, and will make a capable and an excellent substitute.

Judging by the number of hockey associations in England, the game has taken a deep root in this country. Chief among these associations are the Midland Counties L.H.A., the Western Counties L.H.A., the Northern L.H.A., and the Southern L.H.A.

Few realise the hold hockey has on the affections of English girls, and the amount of pleasure that can be derived from it. Each club must comprise such a number of players that the

game is essentially a sociable one, and many people are brought into contact with one another who otherwise would have no opportunity of meeting. The selfish pot-hunting element is entirely out of the question in hockey, as no personal advantage can be gained, as in golf or tennis, only honour and glory. The first thought of each player is for her club; its reputation has to be kept up, and everything done to further its interests.

The Southern team have sustained a loss this year in Miss Cozens Hardy, who on account of her marriage will be unable to fill her usual place. Her absence will be greatly regretted, as she was one of the best players, and has been a member of the team since 1900, while in 1902 she was called upon to represent her country in the International contests. Another player who will be a loss to her team is Miss D. Browne. She first made her reputation in the Sussex county team, then was selected to play for the South, and finally attained the coveted position of inside-right for England.

The English and Irish International Match has been settled for March 10th

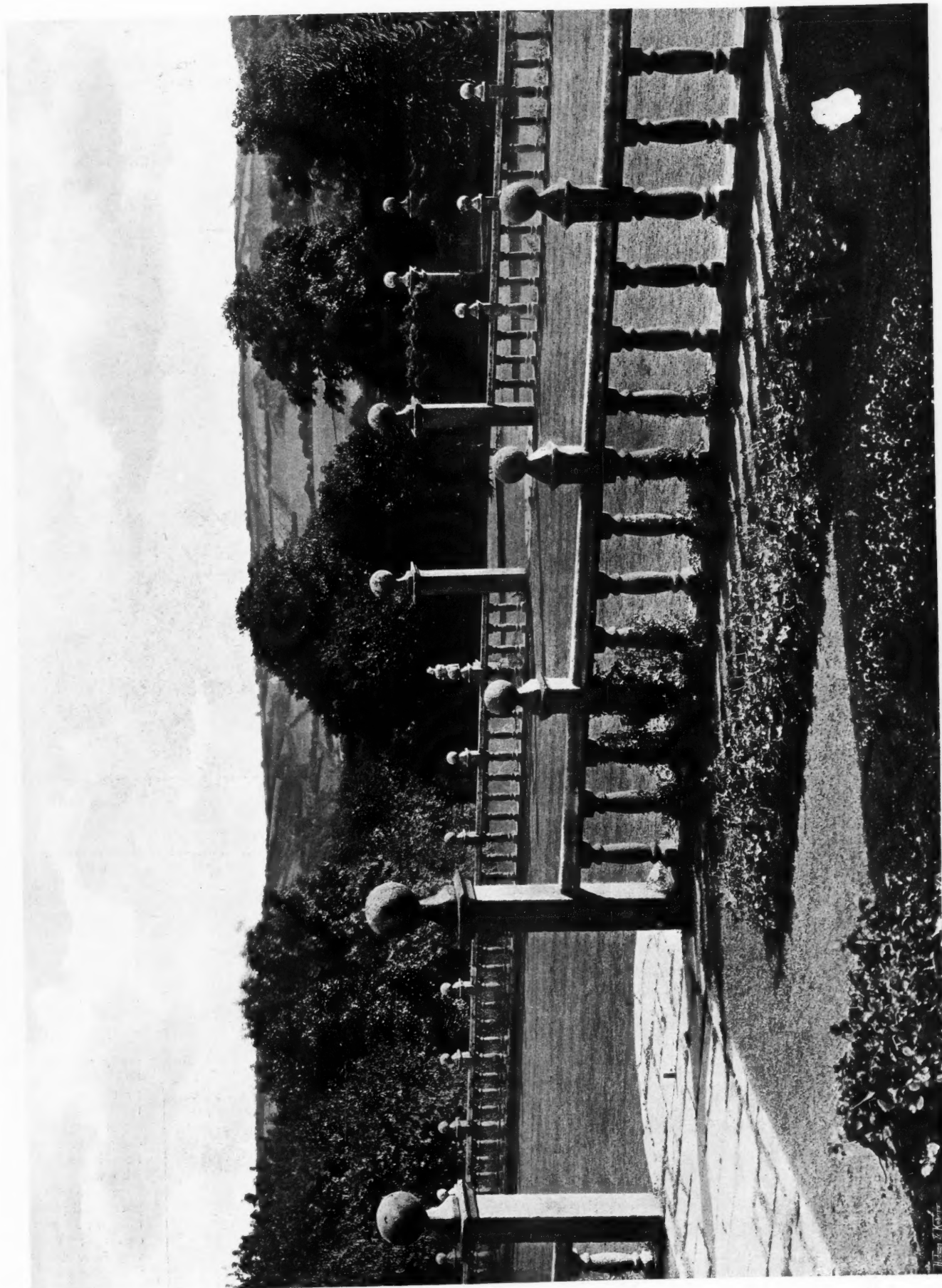


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ANOTHER CLASSIC LEAD FIGURE

"COUNTRY LIFE."

of this year, and is to be played in Dublin. Last year the English team gained a most decisive victory by seven goals to one. This was partly due to the magnificent play of the English team, and to the Irish being a little out of form. Another fact which may be taken into consideration is that the ground on which the match was played at Richmond was a far better one than the Irish had been accustomed to; therefore the play was infinitely faster than the team had any experience of. It is almost impossible to secure a ground in Ireland of the same description as a first-class English one, on account of the greater prevalence of wet weather. The year before last Ireland had a very similar team, and yet managed to beat England by five



STONEWORK AND GRASS AT NEWTON FERRERS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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goals to one, the match being played in Dublin. The International contests create a vast amount of interest, and last year at Richmond there must have been nearly 5,000 spectators, who throughout the match watched the play keenly. It must be rather a trial to the nerves of the competitors to play before such an enormous gallery; but hockey has the advantage of being such a fast game that, once started, no time for reflection is left, and everything is lost sight of save the effort of obtaining the ball, and making or defending goals. The players have all their energies concentrated on watching the fate of the ball, and therefore are not so liable to attacks of nerves as those who take part in other slower games.

In Ireland hockey has many enthusiastic adherents. It is most keenly played about Dublin, where some of the best grounds are situated, and where the All-Ireland Ladies' Hockey Union has its headquarters. The hon. secretary of this institution is Miss L. K. Meaden, who was elected to fill the vacancy caused by the retirement of Miss Atthill. There are four branches of the union—Ulster, Munster, Leinster, and Connaught, the

latter of which joined for the first time last year. Inter-provincial matches are played between these four provinces, and the International team is selected from those who most distinguish themselves in these games. Of the provinces, Leinster is perhaps the strongest, Ulster being second best. The dates of the provincial matches have been settled for some time early in February. Leinster and Munster are to play in Dublin, also Ulster v. Munster, while Ulster plays against Leinster in Belfast. The hon. secretaries of these branches are: Leinster, Miss Baker; Connaught, Mrs. Galbraight; Munster, Miss Sergeant; Ulster, Miss Wilson.

The Scottish Women's Hockey Association held their annual general meeting, and, after some discussion, the new scheme proposed by the council for dividing the clubs into five districts was adopted. The divisions consist of Edinburgh, Glasgow, St. Andrews, Midlands, and South Western. The officers of the union are: President, Mrs. Chalmers-Watson; vice-president, Miss Ure; council, Miss Hutchison and Miss Gale; hon. secretary and treasurer, Miss W. Littlejohn.

MAY HEZLET.

SHOOTING AT GLEVERING HALL.



W. A. Kouch.

THE SHOOTING PARTY.

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MR. F. E. R. FRYER, who has kindly furnished us with an excellent account of the shooting at Glevering, which the accompanying pictures illustrate, introduces the subject in a humorous and significant way. "Glevering Hall," he writes, "the property of Mr. Arthur Heywood, lies in the centre of about the best shooting district in East Suffolk. Rendlesham, Campsea Ashe, Sudbourne, and Easton are all adjacent, and their railway station, Wickham Market, on a Monday evening in the height of the season is a place for a traveller who is nervous as to the destination of his luggage to avoid carefully. I have seen mountains of luggage

turned out there on a dark November evening, to be sorted out by a willing, but, on these occasions, a totally inadequate, staff

of porters, and destined for four or five different houses. You are really very lucky if you reach the right one yourself, much less your baggage. On one of these occasions I saw the stalwart host of one of the places named, who had come down to the station to receive his guests, forcibly drag off a lady he knew, but who was not this time one of his party, and put her in his own carriage; and it was only by his returning to effect a fresh capture that she was able to escape. But all is well that ends well, and lucky indeed is the shooter who



W. A. Kouch.

OUTSIDE BARTHROP'S COVERT.

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is invited to make one of these parties."

Is not that a suggestive description, recalling the experiences of very many of us who have shot in the Eastern Counties, of one or other of the railway stations on the Great Eastern line that are the central points of assemblage for subsequent dispersion to various country houses in their neighbourhood? Glevering itself is not a very large estate, but it has the credit of being managed with a care and knowledge that make its bags exceptionally good. At the same time that the bags are heavy in comparison with the acreage, the best interests of the shooter are catered for, so that he has quality as well as quantity provided for him. As Mr. Fryer remarks, the Eastern Counties can produce plenty of fast-flying partridges, but they cannot compete with the hill countries of the West in respect of the height of their pheasants. To get pheasants at a great height is possible only in steeply hilly countries. To get them at a height that shall make them even interesting to shoot is difficult in a flat country; but it is not impossible, granted that the coverts are well laid out and that the general management is good, and these are conditions that have to be granted to the fullest limit in respect of Glevering. The shooting illustrated here is over the best beat on the ground. It is so good that, although on the day when the photographs were taken from which the illustrations are here reproduced, the bag ran well into the four figures, the total does not compare at all well with the average recorded for previous years. The coverts consist in the main of a chain of picturesque woods running round the park. There are big glades and spaces between the different coverts—breaks in the links of the chain—and across these the pheasants are driven, of course with all that science can suggest in the way of nets, of "sievens" or strings with feathers, of stops, and of advantage taken of all natural circumstances that may induce the pheasants to come "tall."

Mr. N. A. Heywood, the acting host, and eldest son of the owner, who no longer takes the field himself, has had a life-long experience of the conditions and demands of shooting in Norfolk, and no one can know better both how to bring the birds "up" and to bring them over. Neither he nor his brother, nor any of the guests who formed the battery of guns on the day when the photographs were taken, are at all deficient in the art of bringing the birds "down"—the third of the adverbially designated arts that have to do with the pleasant subject of the pheasant. It is invidious to make comparisons. Enough to say that Mr. Fryer himself was among the shooters, with the brothers Heywood, Lord Darnley, and Mr. Bassett. At Glevering a good many of the versicolour pheasants have been turned down. They have done very well there, and it is interesting to read the verdict upon them passed by Mr. Fryer, speaking with the authority of one whom many have rated as the best game shot in England, and whom few have ever rated lower than the second best. He writes "of the versicolour pheasant, a smaller but equally beautiful bird" (*i.e.*, in comparison with the common pheasant), "and, I think, a much more satisfactory one to shoot at, as it certainly flies quicker off the mark than the common pheasant, and, being



W. A. Rouch.

MR. BASSETT BUSY.

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W. A. Rouch.

MR. FRYER IN THE WOOD.

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W. A. Rouch.

THEY FLY WELL IN THE OPEN.

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shorter in the tail, should have a special attraction for those shooters who, unfortunately, have a tendency to destroy that beautiful appendage of the ordinary cock bird. . . . I can confidently recommend their trial on other estates." This is a particularly interesting statement from a judge so very well qualified. Their "quickness off the mark" is a property that should make these birds very useful not only in the set covert-shooting—where the ideal, at all events, is to bring birds over the guns after they have been for some time in flight—but also, and perhaps more, in the wilder shoots, where the bird is more often shot as it rises. The charm of having a variety in the kind of bird to be shot is one that must not be overlooked in estimating the value of some of these less common pheasants, a value distinct from, and additional to, their intrinsic merit as game birds. The Glevering Hall estate is, of course, an ideal one for experiments with any birds of this kind—the soil is just right, the property is in the owner's holding, and under the management of those who know extremely well what they are doing. But these pheasants do not seem to be distinctly more delicate nor to require more care in the rearing than the ordinary birds. It is likely that they would fare quite well on other soils, and it is very possible that



W. A. Rouch.

A PRETTY STAND (AFTER LUNCH).

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the Pheasant" in the COUNTRY LIFE Library of Sport—Shooting Volumes.

A further sign of the benefit to a shooting estate of being held in the hands of an owner or of a long-resident landlord, with the proviso that such an one may have the will and the ability to keep on the best of terms with the tenant farmers, is



W. A. Rouch.

WAITING ON THE PLOUGHLAND.

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Mr. Fryer's strong recommendation may be the means of inducing shooting owners and tenants in other parts of England to follow an example that has been so well set at Glevering and at comparatively few other places. The different kinds of pheasants best suited for turning out in English coverts are briefly discussed in Mr. Cornish's chapter on "The Natural History of

to be seen in the large number (as compared with most parts of the Eastern Counties) of hares that figure in the day's bag at Glevering. So many of the shooting places in these days of agricultural depression are let for a tenancy of a year or two only, that even if these tenants be the best in the world, the farmer is never sufficiently sure how he stands (or for how long

the situation will stand as it is) to make it worth his while to take anything short of the fullest advantage of the Ground Game Act. Many shooting estates, again, are in the occupation of tenants who only appear for a few weeks in the autumn; they are hardly ever known by sight to the agricultural tenants, and that is not a state of things likely to lead to the consideration of farmer for shooter that results in preserving for the latter the lives of many of the hares and rabbits, which are good to eat on the table of the farmer and are not altogether good labourers in his fields. On the whole, there are very few places in England that approximate so nearly as Glevering to the ideal, in all respects, of a moderate-sized shooting estate; nor are there many men, of those who are fortunate enough to come to Glevering as shooting guests, that



W. A. Rouch.

BRINGING UP THE GAME.

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will leave it without having to admit that there still was left for them something to learn about the three arts of bringing the birds "up, over, and down."

LITTLE EGRETS.

THE little egret is unquestionably the most elegant of all the heron family, only rivalled in the creamy purity of its plumage by the great white heron. The fatal gift of beauty has cost these two birds dearly, for all over the world they undergo a relentless persecution from mankind, or perhaps I should say from womankind; for it is the desire of fashionable women to decorate themselves with the snowy filaments which deck the breast and shoulders of the egrets in their nuptial plumage, miscalled in the milliner's jargon "ospreys," which leads to the barbarous cruelties of the plume-hunters. One would suppose that an account of these shocking acts of blood-curdling atrocity, which have been published again and again, would deter women from branding themselves as accomplices by wearing the feathers which have been acquired by the causing of so much suffering and needless agony. The average woman, however, does not care a pin about what is done behind her back, as long as she does not actually see it herself; and I suppose the practice will continue as long as there are any egrets left to supply the demand. Already this supply is becoming woefully diminished, and one has to penetrate into far remote and uninhabited wildernesses to see much of these long-suffering members of the feathered race.

Some years ago I was fortunate enough to witness an



R. B. Lodge.

LITTLE EGRET.

Copyright

assemblage of these most lovely birds, nesting in company with several other species, and never shall I forget the pleasure I experienced at the extraordinary scene.

Far from the haunts of men, in the midst of an Andalusian marisma, surrounded on all sides by leagues of desolate sand-dunes, and gloomy pine forests inhabited by red deer, wild boars, and an occasional lynx or two, we stumbled, one day in May, on a small reed-encircled lagoon, thickly grown over with tamarisk bushes. These bushes were nearly hidden from view by the multitude of white birds which clustered on their branches, and at our approach rose into the air in dense circling clouds. My Spanish guides plunged into the water and rode their horses through the bushes, seeking eggs, while I lost no time in wading in with my camera to photograph the herons, which returned to their nesting-trees in hundreds, in spite of our presence on the scene.

The sight of one of these nesting colonies of Southern herons is one of



R. B. Lodge. PAIR OF LITTLE EGRETS & NEST. Copyright

great interest. The immense masses of birds, clustering in every kind of grotesque attitude on the tapering and slender tamarisk twigs, amid a perfect babel of uncouth croakings and grunts and flapping of wings, make a picture so extraordinary as to be never forgotten by anybody who has been once fortunate enough to behold it. The egrets were in immense numbers, and in company with them were a few Squacco herons, hardly less elegant than themselves, hundreds of buff-backed herons, and also great numbers of night herons and glossy ibis.

The slight bushes, submerged to the depth of about 4ft., were laden with the nests of all these different species, and mostly contained full clutches of eggs, varying in their shapes, but all of different shades of blue, from the almost white rounded egg of the buff-backed heron to the deep turquoise blue of the glossy ibis.

The range of the little egret does not extend very far north, but in warm, marshy, and uninhabited, or sparsely inhabited, countries it is found in some form or other, varying in colour of legs and beak, but all alike in the beautiful creamy white plumage and the long pendant filmy plumes, the possession of which leads to their destruction. In *Ardea garzetta*, the European form, which has only penetrated as far north as England on one or two occasions, the beak and legs are black, toes yellowish, the bare skin round the eyes of a beautiful pale blue or lavender colour, eyes yellow. The American form, which has suffered so much of late years at the hands of the Florida plume-hunters, is probably the same bird which I saw many years ago in the West Indies. It is equally beautiful, but has the beak yellow instead of black. In those days I had not yet learnt the interest of watching rare birds, and the gun was seldom out of my hands whenever there was any chance of shooting anything, and I can well remember the fright I experienced after shooting my first egret. I had lain in wait for one before daybreak at the mouth of a certain Jamaica river, and just as the eastern sky began to glow with the coming of day, I fired at an egret on the further side, which fell into the water between two dense reed-beds, the known haunt of many alligators. Stripping off my clothes, I swam in to retrieve the bird, which I was very anxious to possess, and finding it still struggling, held its head under water with a bamboo which was floating on the surface, for to swim up to

the bird while alive would be to run the risk of a stab in the eye from its sharp beak. Then, taking a toe between my teeth, I started to swim back. The bird, however, partly revived, and pecked my back vigorously all the way. Presently I brushed against some rough object under water, and, having the idea of alligators in my mind all the time, struck out for the nearest shore as fast as I could, getting through the water faster than I have ever done before or since. The object, however, which



R. B. Lodge.

BREEDING COLONY OF LITTLE EGRETS.

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gave me this fright was nothing more alarming than a submerged log or branch carried down by the stream. A few days later, near to the same place, I came to closer quarters with an alligator while retrieving a little bittern from amongst the submerged roots of an immense mangrove.

ON THE GREEN.

QUITE a good little diary—since this is the season when diarists turn over new pages—is that which is called the "Golfer's Diary." It is about the right size; that is to say, it will go in a pocket without spoiling the beautiful symmetry of a golfer's figure, and there is just enough space given to each day to put down your future engagements and your past movements. It does not lend itself to the endless record of states of mind, like the diary of Marie Bashkirtseff, or of politics, like that of Mr. Gladstone; but it will serve the plain man well. The rules of golf are in the beginning of the book, and spaces for memoranda at the end. There are a few more oddments, but these are the important features, and are enough. Messrs. Walker and Co., Limited, Farringdon House, Warwick Lane, E.C., publish it, and I believe, but am not sure (mine was a gift—which is perhaps why I like it), that it can be bought for what a great financier has called "the ridiculous sum of eighteenpence."

Considering how frost-bound we have been in the South, it is rather curious that they should be able to play golf at all in Scotland, and in such an easterly part of Scotland as North Berwick. But North Berwick links cannot have been very badly frost-bound when Mr. Laidlay, playing with the Prime Minister, went round in 77. Mr. Balfour evidently was not playing well, but it is good to see that he can take such risks as to motor in from Whittinghame and play a round of golf in the East of Scotland in Christmas week so soon after being laid up. To be sure, this North Berwick is a seaside place, and the seaside has a way of having a less severe winter climate

than the inland courses; but still the east wind blows very easterly there, and North Berwick is the spot for which Professor Huxley used to say that he had such profound respect, because people went there to be "braced," from Edinburgh—from Edinburgh, actually!

The latest idea of the golf ball inventor or improver, inspired by "the blessed word resilience," seems to be to have a series of concentric india-rubber spheres inside a coating of gutta-percha, the whole to be centred on a hollow ball of metal. Why not have a clapper inside the metal core, so as to ring a bell when the ball is well hit? Professor Tait used to tell me that the most elastic stuff in the world was glass. Why do some of the men of many inventions not try this for golf balls, or for the centre of golf balls? But perhaps the idea of elasticity is not the same in the golfer's mind as in that of the scientific person. Their ideas do differ. Unless the inventors come to an end with their inventions soon, however, we shall have to pass a new rule of golf forbidding any ball to be driven more than 300yds.—just as the Trades' Unions forbid the strong men laying more bricks in the day than the weak men; but exception must be made for frost-bound ground.

It is not very often that even "what we are pleased to call the British climate," as the Americans say, although we know it to be a quick-change artist, makes such a remarkable alteration of golfing conditions in so short a time as it lately has made by the conversion, in a single night, of slush to metallic solid. On the whole, looking back on the year that has gone, we find it to have been very favourable for the operations of the green-keeper on the small scale, but not nearly so good for any big work, so that those who have had any considerable alteration of courses, of greens, and of hazards, and especially those who have had to lay out new courses (except on dry and upland ground), have been at a great disadvantage. For most of the autumn and winter the ground has been so soaked as to be unworkable, and now, so soon as the dry weather comes, an iron frost comes with it, and the soil is yet more impracticable than before. The sudden change has altered conditions of play altogether, for when the surface is hard frozen golf becomes a farce, or what the Englishman calls, in a phrase that the Scot resents and despises, "a means of exercise." A Sandow's chest developer is that; and so is the treadmill—I speak of the latter from hearsay only. HORACE HUTCHINSON.

WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

WINTER IN SEASON.

THE New Year commenced at any rate under favourable auspices, suggesting that the British climate had determined to turn over a new leaf with the beginning of 1904. After three days of frost, we had got rid of the absurdity of the spring and summer flowers which bloomed at Christmas, and the ringing of skates and shouting of skaters on the pond struck a healthier January note than all our late talk of the "abnormal mildness of the season." Wild life responded promptly to the change. The annual summer plants which had dragged out a prolonged existence, with a paltry blossom here and there on outworn and ragged stems, collapsed where they stood. The nettles, that in sheltered corners had brazened out the melancholy autumn with make-believe of summer luxuriance, shrivelled and turned black. All the marching army of Nature halted to take cover against the searching attacks of the cold wind. Winter had come at last.

WHERE BIRDS SEARCH FOR FOOD.

The birds especially rose, or rather sank, to the occasion. A day of frost is worse for them than a Sunday. Not only do the ploughs, which ordinarily turn up such a generous store of worms, stand idle in the furrows, but the furrows themselves are frozen impenetrably hard. So the ploughland is deserted, while the rooks and the starlings, the plovers and the gulls, distribute themselves over the pastures. Here the ground is hard, too, but so long as snow holds off there is still food to be had for careful searching, and if you examine the ground whence, say, a large flock of golden plover rises at your approach, you will find each mossy tuft of grass perforated with the round holes made by probing bills. You will notice, too, that the holes are most thickly clustered where the hoar frost lies, for though it may be this which gives the fields their most wintry aspect, the birds seem to know that it forms only in spots sheltered from the bitter wind. It is, of course, to the same spots that chilled insects and grubs have crept for safety, and it is there that, under their cover-lid of matted grass and hoar frost, the sensitive bill of the plover finds them.

LIFE-SAVING INSTINCT.

This scattering of hosts of birds from the idle ploughland to the pastures, where they come under nearer view, makes them seem always to be tamer in the country on Sundays than on other days; but in times of frost and snow hunger accentuates their negligence of man. Considering that, to four-fifths of the small birds which populate our fields in twittering flocks, this is the first winter that they have known, it is rather remarkable how promptly they accommodate themselves to circumstances, assembling in crowds at the bird-table or round the barns, or wherever man gives or spills enough to keep lives in small birds' bodies. Ancestral habit, too, seems to teach each kind of bird exactly where to go for food which it is specially adapted to procure.

GREENFINCHES IN WINTER.

Year after year, the first spell of continued frost will drive the snipe from the same dykes to the same spring-source. Yet these must be different snipe from year to year, because almost all are annually shot. The same



T. A. Metcalfe.

YOUNG KESTREL AND BLACKBIRD.

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frost will as certainly cause the dabchicks to migrate from a certain icebound pond to a certain trout stream; yet they are not the same dabchicks, because in the narrow width of the clear stream few escape the village lads, who are past-masters in the art of driving the terrified "didapper," as they call this little grebe, into some water-rat's hole, whence they drag it and kill it for the sake of the few inches of silky plumage on the breast, which, they say, can be patched together to make a fine waistcoat. The same frost, again, will drive the moorhen from the dykes to the hedges, and the greenfinch from the hedges to the dykes. One can understand that a swimming and wading bird like the moorhen should discover that frozen water suits its needs no longer, and should wander off to the nearest coppice or hedge; but that greenfinches should at the same time make a contrary change, and leave the hedges for the frozen dykes, is less easily understood, when one bears in mind that the greenfinches which do so this year are not, in four cases out of five, the same greenfinches which did it last year. Yet greenfinches have presumably been acting in the same way ever since the dykes existed, and will continue so to act for all time. Watching them, you can see that they find food of some sort among the dead reeds and bur-reeds—seeds, probably, which their bills are just powerful enough to crack; but seeing always that the first real frost of the winter inevitably brings them alone of hard-billed birds—unless a few redpoles bear them company—to the dykes, one cannot help respectfully admiring the ingenuity of Nature, who, by evolution, has fitted some special creature to every special niche.

THE KESTREL'S DIET.

One hardly notices, to take another instance, how abundant kestrels become during the autumn in many parts of England, where they are almost unknown in summer, and how they gradually disappear as winter draws on. They are migrants from further north, who have, somehow, learned to time their annual stay with us to suit the period when the fields which have been cleared of the harvest abound with unprotected mice. Not that the kestrel confines itself religiously to a mouse diet, as well-meaning persons who would save it from destruction often assert. Often in the country you may see a stuffed kestrel in a glass case, with the bird which it was carrying when shot; and in most cases the trophy will be described by its owner as a "sparrow-hawk," simply from the fact that it had killed a small bird. It is no infrequent thing, again, for a kestrel to carry off a bird as large as a starling—for a little falcon that can manage a big brown rat need have little fear of tackling a starling—and I have, alas! handled one bird which was shot upon the body of a half-grown pheasant. No one, moreover, who has reared young kestrels and seen the unhesitating promptitude with which they will seize upon any feathered meal which may be offered to them, can have any doubt that they are accustomed to such meals by ancestral instinct. In the first illustration accompanying these notes there does not appear any doubt in the young kestrel's mind as to the edible quality of the blackbird which it clutches so determinedly.

THE WING AS A WEAPON.

The other illustration represents the same young kestrel in a characteristic and interesting attitude of self-defence. Every bird, although it may fight with beak and claw, seems to know from birth that its wings are its final weapons. If you watch a fight between two domestic pigeons, in which the weaker is at last driven to the wall, you may see it, as a last resort, abandon the attempt to defend itself with its bill, and suddenly deliver a "flip" with its wing, which compels the assailant to sheer off. Sometimes, when two birds are engaged in a more serious combat, from which neither can recede without loss of prestige, the "flip, flip" of their wings will continue for nearly half a minute. But it is evidently an argument which there is no resisting for long; and it is upon this use of the wing as the "last word" in combat that the curious antics of birds which seem to be crippled when their nests or young are in danger is evidently based. When a hen pheasant is alarmed for the safety of her brood she will run to and fro, with one wing drooping as if broken. When a cock pheasant is similarly alarmed concerning the safety of his mate, he will similarly exhibit himself with a drooping wing. But when, on rare occasions, the cock pheasant is actually excited to commit assault and battery upon the enemy, you will see that the drooping wing is merely the club, as it were, with which he threatens to strike the downright blow.

THE LAST RESORT.

If you put your hand into the nest of a sitting pigeon, or if you chance to be assailed by a swan in defence of its nest, you understand at once the force of this argument of the wing. Why, then, do not birds usually employ it in their quarrels? Why reserve it for the last resort? The answer to these questions probably is that the bird cannot know, when it strikes with its wing—the blow being delivered by what we may call the elbow-joint of the wing, though it is really the wrist—whether it may not cripple itself, instead of beating off the adversary. With an injured wing the bird falls an easy victim to every enemy; whereas, in a fight with beaks, it may have its head pecked bare and yet be, so far as the struggle for existence goes, almost as good a bird as before.

E. K. R.

ANGLING REMINISCENCES.

THERE is, assuredly, no need for the apologetic preface with which Mr. F. M. Halford introduces his fishing reminiscences, "An Angler's Autobiography" (Vinton). Anglers, for whom alone the volume is primarily intended, will cordially welcome and diligently study its pages, from which the expert may gain much information, and the beginner find his first steps guided in the right direction. Mr. Halford is well known as perhaps the greatest living authority on the theory and practice of dry-fly fishing and entomology from a fisherman's point of view. From these pages we learn where and how he picked up his proficiency in the art, and by what patient and minute study of Nature by the water-side he learnt to make those masterly imitations of the living insect which have supplanted and dethroned the conventional representations which our ancestors thought and found good enough to deceive the unsophisticated trout of their day. He also had, as he cordially acknowledges, the invaluable assistance of the Rev. A. E. Eaton, who placed his great scientific knowledge of entomology at his disposal.

Mr. Halford's name is so identified with dry-fly fishing, that the earlier chapters in the volume, in which he details his childish initiation into the mysteries of coarse-fishing, his successes with Thames trout, his sea-fishing, salmon-fishing, and trout-fishing experiences with the sunk fly, may come as a surprise to some. The priests of a cult, rather too



T. A. Metcalfe.

TEMPER.

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fond of fulminating excommunications against all creeds but their own, may be surprised to find this Balaam blessing their enemies instead of cursing them; but the best and truest sportsmen are those who are most catholic in their tastes. The chapters dealing with these topics cannot, however, compare in educational value with those on dry-fly fishing. Fishermen generally take to their favourite amusement early in life, and consequently the author's childish adventures with rod and float, in pond and river, are very similar to those of most who have subsequently graduated as masters of different branches of the craft. It is not, however, given to many to have such a day's bream-fishing in the Thames as Mr. Halford records, just after his school days had come to an end, when in Halliford Deep he caught, on very light tackle, so many bream that he is afraid to give their numbers for "fear of unintentional exaggeration." The three largest weighed 6lb., 4½lb., and 4½lb. respectively, and well deserved the honour they received of being preserved and kept in a glass case in his father's hall. As a sea fisherman also he achieved some considerable success, and claims to be one of the pioneers in the substitution of rod, line, and fine tackle for the old-fashioned hand-lines. He mentions the look of astonishment on his Eastbourne boatman's face at such a heterodox notion, and his confident dictum that they would catch no more fish, and lose plenty of tackle in the attempt. Needless to say, this member of a most conservative fraternity, like most others since, was converted by his experiences of the results of the despised innovation.

He does not seem to have been so fortunate in his experience of fishing with the wet fly; Devonshire and the Border country are not places an enthusiast for that form of pastime would select. The trout in the southern county are very small—and the Annan and the Ewan near Moffat have been harried by the long rods of the Borderers, some of the most persistent and successful worm-fishers in existence, until they are almost spoilt for fly-fishing. A spring day on the Don or the Deveron, when there is a good rise of March Brown, and a fair proportion of the basket weigh over a pound each, would have afforded a more promising sample of the sport.

His earliest experiences of dry-fly fishing were on the Wandle, and he tells of many successful days in that beautiful Surrey stream, within twenty minutes of London by rail. All lovers of Nature will share his regret at the manner in which sewage pollution has destroyed this once delightful river. "How sad it is to look back on those days and feel, as one must, that the polluted stream in which few trout, Ephemeridæ or other trout food can live, was once so clean, so fair, and gave such sport to those who frequented its lovely banks."

The greater part of the book, as might be expected, deals with that Mecca of the dry-fly fisher—the Test, where the author spent many seasons on the water of the old Houghton Club, and also on the Upper Test and near Winchester. Considerations of space forbid us to dwell at length on the details of the many good days' sport he enjoyed in those favoured spots, and on the Itchen and Kennet; or his friendships with such masters of the art as Foster Mortimore, Francis Francis, G. S. Marryatt, John Day, and William Senior, who contributes an introduction to the volume. Details are given of the minute and careful observation and experiment by which the knowledge was acquired imparted to the public in the dry-fly series of

books. Much of the author's time was spent by the river side with a butterfly net instead of a fishing-rod, and not merely were dead specimens of duns preserved in Canada balsam for microscopical observation, but live specimens were kept in cages to study their metamorphosis from sub-imago to imago. Experiments in casting are also detailed, of which the results were recorded by instantaneous photography. It will surprise many to learn that neither the author, nor such a master as Mr. Marryatt could succeed in making a cast at all "with the line fully extended behind the rod"; and that they broke several

rods in the attempt. In spite of their theoretical explanation and practical experience, we suspect that many will remain unconvinced that it is not the best method to adopt on the rare occasions when the state of the wind and the condition of things behind the angler makes it possible. The book is illustrated with more than forty plates from photographs of the various spots taken specially by the author's friend, Major Cook Daniells, and portraits of fishing worthies. If perhaps a little too lavish of detail, it is certainly a volume no fisherman's library should be without.

THE BRIDGE AT ABINGDON.

BOTH these pictures, little as the reader who knows not Abingdon might think it, represent parts of the same bridge, and the history of it is preserved in a very curious edifice of old time hard by. The edifice in question is called Christ's Hospital, although it has not, as the minor foundation of the same name at Hertford has, a connection with the familiar institution of the same title associated with many famous names, but most intimately with that of Charles Lamb. For the history, it is given plainly and, truthfully in a picture, the gift of one Francis Little in 1607, and in courtly but quite untrustworthy language, on a scroll let into the wall of the wainscoted hall. There we learn that—

"Kyng Henry V. in his fourthe yere
He hath i found for his folk a brige
Berkscheere,
Where cartis with carriage may go &
come, clere
That many winters afore were marred in
the myre."

Moreover, of the old verses—the copy of which in this instance is taken from Colonel Cooper King's "History of Berkshire," and there are more of them—another version may be found in Murray, and they are quaint throughout. But, as an historical statement, they have next to no value. Henry V. was no more the founder of this bridge than Edward VII. was the founder of the structure crossing the river at Kew which he opened last year; perhaps, indeed, Henry has even less claim to be regarded as the founder than his successor has in the case of Kew Bridge, for it is not on record that Henry declared this bridge open—he simply allowed it to be built. The same flattering tale was once told in one of the windows of St. Helen's Church in Abingdon in hexameters equally faulty as verse and as history:

"Henricus Quartus (*sic*) quarto fundaverat anno
Rex pontem Burfordi super undas atque Culhamford."

As a matter of fact, Henry neither found the material nor the wages



Marsh Bros.

BURFORD BRIDGE AT ABINGDON.

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for this bridge of Borough-ford or Burford. Sir Peter Besils of Besselsleigh, worthy member of a very ancient and notable Berkshire family, provided the stone, and Geoffrey Barbour of Abingdon furnished the money, to the extent of 1,000 marks, with which the workmen were paid; and the picture in Christ's Hospital shows Barbour handing over the money to one Stonehouse, and the bridge in process of construction in the background. It was begun in 1416, and there, unaltered in point of shape, it has stood to this day. The reference in the second Latin line quoted is to a causeway to Culhamford Bridge, which causeway was also built by Barbour.

Both these pictures, then, represent aspects of Burford Bridge, commonly called Abingdon Bridge, which has a vast number of arches. That in which the gleaming water is shown was taken immediately below the ancient hostelry known as the Nag's Head, and the arch to the right of the picture is that through which navigation passes, by no means too easily when the stream runs strong. The Nag's Head itself is over the way, on the other side of the bridge. On the left of the picture is the old gaol, and in the background the cupola of the Town Hall, perhaps designed by Inigo Jones. Taken as a whole it is a distinctly attractive and typically English scene as it stands, but, curiously enough, it is prettier now than it was, even a few months ago, when this picture was taken, for the stables of the Nag's Head have been demolished, with the result that one gains a very taking view up a many-gabled and ancient street. It must be admitted, however, that the old building was inoffensive, that the gap left is at present a trifle bare and raw, and that a notice, in black on a white ground, calling attention to the existence of the ancient house of call (which must surely be well known), is not so pleasing. Still, on the whole, the new vista of old-world architecture is an advantage.

The other picture, taken from the up-river side, represents the eastern extremity of the same bridge, flanked by



Marsh Bros.

FLOOD BRIDGE, ABINGDON.

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an elm of some age. Beyond is the avenue of horse-chestnuts, with Barbour's causeway underneath it on one side, which gives dignity to the approach to Abingdon from Dorchester. That has more than once in this year of tears presented a very different face to that which it wears on this page. Those wedge-shaped buttresses were called upon both in June and October to part the tawny floods which came sweeping down the river from Oxford, to be greeted a little way below the bridge by the swollen waters of that modest little river the Ock, which does all that it can to drain the spacious plain of the Vale of the White Horse: and nobly, the cattle rails having doubtless been moved by the stream, if not by man, those buttresses did their work. Late in October the raised ground at the left of the picture was half-submerged, the wall being quite invisible, and two little boys were observed going through the form of fishing over the gate. This lends point to some ancient doggerel quoted by Mr. Falkner:

"Another blessed besines is briggies to make
That there the pepul may not passe after greette schowres,
Dole it is to drawe a deede body out of a lake,
That was fulled in a fount stoon and a felow of oures."

"Fullled in a fount stoon" is, by the way, "washed in a font," otherwise "baptised"; and certainly the October aspect of this meadow was such as to show that the makers of Burford Bridge were real benefactors, and they, besides those named, were, according to Colonel Cooper King, John Huchyar and William and Maud Hales. How valuable the structure was then to the countryside may be judged by the fact that Wallingford, fourteen miles distant by river, was the nearest bridge down stream. It may perhaps be urged that the number of the arches, their narrowness, and their inadequate height is something of a nuisance to navigation; but it is earnestly to be hoped that a bridge which has looked beautiful for 500 years may continue in its present form for another like period. It looks for all the world like doing it; for our ancestors could certainly build.

CYGNUS.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DOG-HIPS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In some of the country lanes near my house I have noticed lately that many of the old birds' nests in the hedgerows are filled up quite full with what appeared to me like split peas. On closer examination I found it to consist of dog-hips (wild rose fruit) torn quite small. Also I found many clefts and hollows in the thorn trunks filled to overflowing with the same material. I may say we had a severe storm and heavy fall of snow (12 in. to 18 in.) about three weeks ago, and it is only since then that they have made their appearance. The snow lay for about two weeks, and during that time the birds were severely punished from want of food. I take it these are stores against a possible future storm. I have seen only one blackbird in the act of tearing the fruit to pieces. There are plenty of hips but no haws in our neighbourhood this year. I do not notice that the stores are diminishing in size, so I conclude they are not eating them at present. As I have never noticed this before, I am anxious to know whether any of your readers are familiar with such a thing.—A. D. P.

[These apparent stores of fragments of rose hips are really the accumulated refuse from the meals of long-tailed field-mice, which use the old birds' nests, etc., as tables on which they can dissect such food as hips, haws, and acorns. They would be in danger from enemies if they ate meals which take any time upon the ground.—ED.]

YELLOW WAGTAIL IN DECEMBER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—It may interest your readers to learn that I also saw one here on Sunday last, and observed a pair of these birds on two occasions about the middle of November. We appear to be fortunate by having many feathered visitors to the grounds here, not usually found so near to the metropolis; for instance, the butcher-bird, sanderlings, gold-crests (to-day), the kingfisher, very often, an occasional heron, coot, and recently a pair of water-hens traversed our lawn, about 20 yds. from the house, for half-an-hour. The lesser grebe is now paying us its annual visit, as well as a few gulls, skirmishers, I suppose, from the army between London Bridge and Westminster. The dear little common wren is in strong evidence.—H. TRENGROUSE, Chesfield, Hampton Wick.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Referring to correspondence in last week's COUNTRY LIFE on "Yellow Wagtail in December," it may interest your readers to know that on New Year's Day I saw a yellow wagtail on the high road between Greasby Village and Frankby Village, near Birkenhead, Cheshire. The bird was in the company of a pied wagtail. I happened to be riding my bicycle at the time, and as the birds flew in front of me for some distance, I am absolutely certain that the bird was no other than the beautiful *Mortacilla flava*.—A. CLOVER Woods, Claughton, Birkenhead.

THE SPARROW-HAWK.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—As one who has trained and flown many sparrow-hawks who have given me great sport, and for whom I have a great liking, I must stand up for them against your title of the picture "A Murderer at Large." They are designed for living on live birds, and on live birds they live; but why "murderers," then? They can't help being created thus; they only take their

natural food. You would not write "A Murderer at Large" under the picture of a fox, who is ten times worse, for he kills for mere lust of killing whenever he gets the chance, which a hawk never does. And what about ourselves? We are accessories to the killing of hosts of innocent oxen and sheep; and as for game, we do that ourselves: Murderers at large?—ACCIPITER.

TEACHING THE BLACKBIRD.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The accompanying photograph shows one of the most interesting relationships that can exist between a caged bird and the owner. It is a



picture of a small boy engaged in teaching his favourite blackbird an unfamiliar piece of music. Perhaps some people may think that the bird's natural song is more charming than any imitation of human music it may be taught to make. Nevertheless, it is pleasant to see the good understanding that exists between the bird and his young master, and it is extraordinary what an interest the bird takes in the performance, and how quickly it picks up the air if the same tune is repeatedly played to it. Of course, it is necessary to keep it away from the society of birds of its own species, and also to remove any disturbing influence during the lessons.—S. R.

"MEMORIES OF THE MONTHS."

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I can well believe that your reviewer was bored by the collection of random notes published under the above title, but I submit that he is not therefore justified in misrepresenting what I have written in them. He gives as a "characteristic instance of absurdly large conclusions drawn from very slender premisses" what he describes as my "argument" that South America and Australia were once joined by land, founded on the existence in both continents of the same species of fresh-water fish. Had he read to the end of the paragraph from which he quotes he would find as follows: "In any case it would be rash, in the absence of geological evidence, to assume a former distribution of land and ocean to account for the presence of *Galaxias* in lands so widely separated." "Errors of scientific fact" are another fault with which I am charged, and to which I am quite ready to own when they are pointed out; but when your reviewer states that "it is not true" that the common Clouded Yellow butterfly was "until lately supposed to be recruited only by wind-blown individuals from the Continent," I can only refer him to the opinion frequently expressed by recognised authorities. I quote from the only book on Lepidoptera at hand—Mr. Hulme's "Butterflies and Moths," in the Woburn Library—published since my notes were written: "The Pale Clouded Yellow (*Colias hyale*) is very variable in its appearances, since it may sometimes be found in abundance, and then for years be a great rarity. This peculiarity it shares with its relative, the Clouded Yellow (*Colias edusa*). . . . It does not seem that the species can quite stand what cheery optimists about Christmas-time call seasonable weather. Hence it would appear that we are largely kept supplied by immigration across the English Channel, and that these visitors, despite their efforts to naturalise themselves, find in due time the climatic conditions too stern for them." Upon points wherein your reviewer's observation has led him to a different conclusion to mine, I can, of course, take no possible objection to his condemning my view. I may express a mild surprise, however, that he pronounces the rose and the meadow-sweet to be "scarcely at all attractive to insects." I suppose he understood that I did not refer to double roses, which produce no sweets. Let him examine the blossoms

of the single Macartney rose, and see if he can find one without a little company of black-coated Coleoptera.—HERBERT MAXWELL, Monreith.

[We forwarded this letter to "E. K. R.," who says: "It may be the case that, with regard to one fish, Sir Herbert Maxwell qualified the absurdly large conclusion of his argument with an admission of its rashness; but how does this sentence in the next paragraph, regarding another fish, read: 'But at the time when it' (the burbot—not 'turbot,' please, Mr. Printer) 'acquired the exclusively fresh-water habit, there must have been terrestrial connection between Europe and America, for the burbot is now the same in both these continents'? This is what I mean by the shuffling of continents to account for the habits of a fish, which can be much more easily and simply explained otherwise. With regard to the second point, it is absurd to quote from a very new, 'popular,' and none too accurate a book on butterflies to controvert a fact within the knowledge of every working entomologist of experience who has been familiar with the common British Clouded Yellow in all its stages. That the Clouded Yellow is frequently reinforced from abroad we all think probable; but Sir Herbert Maxwell cannot quote a single authority, not even Professor Hulme, in support of his statement that until lately it was supposed to be recruited only in this way. With regard to the third and last point, Sir Herbert Maxwell now draws a distinction between single and 'double roses, which produce no sweets.' Would it surprise him to learn (*vide* Lubbock's 'British Wild Flowers in Relation to Insects' and works on Botany *passim*) that single roses do not produce any sweets either?"—ED.]

AN ANCIENT CAPVING.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am sending you a photograph of an old stone carving which may be of interest to your readers. This curious piece of work stood at one time in a niche in the Norman Tower at Bury St. Edmunds, but has since been removed.



Its age is quite unknown, but the subject is thought to represent "The Fall of Man."—J. P. C.

TOURING IN A CARAVAN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Can any of your readers give me some information about caravan touring? I am thinking of spending my next summer holiday in this manner, but am totally ignorant as to procedure—namely, whence to hire a van and at what cost; arranging for standing room in the fields at night; some idea of the route for a fortnight's easy travelling, starting about thirty miles from London; household and other necessities; and some practical hints about general management. If any kind reader can assist me, I shall be most grateful.—GIPSY.



[We should be extremely obliged to any correspondent who, having spent his holiday in this manner, will set down the particulars asked for.—ED.]

AN OLD NORMAN DOORWAY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I enclose you a photograph of an old Norman doorway at Peakirk. It is a perfect specimen of Norman architecture of about 1150. The ornamentations are varied, and the tympanum is unique, the three fans being descriptive of the Holy Trinity. The church is dedicated to St. Pega, sister to Guthla of Croyland Abbey, and is situated about five miles from that place.—X.

A CAT-PROOF FENCE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—For about a year now I have been keeping rabbits in large quantities upon a fenced-in field. The enclosing wire is about 7ft. high, and the plan answers admirably, save for one defect. As soon as the young ones are able to run about they are immediately seized and killed by the cats, who thus account for perhaps forty-eight or forty-nine out of fifty. I wonder if you or any of your readers could advise some good and fairly inexpensive plan of killing or preventing the cats without injury to the rabbits.—A RABBIT FANCIER.

[If about a foot of the netting at the top is turned down so as to stand at an angle of 45deg. outwards, cats will be unable to surmount the fence.—ED.]

A CANINE EPICURE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—It would be interesting to know if a love of nuts is peculiar to the Aberdeen terrier. My Aberdeen terrier shows just the same weakness for nuts as does the one described by "H. G. H." in your paper last week. My terrier taught himself to crack and shell filberts, and is very clever and neat at it. He has other curious dietary tastes, among which is a love for blackberries, and when they are in season he will trot down the garden to the bramble bushes, and there "sit up" begging until some of the berries are given to him. He has a fine taste, too, in strawberries, and I have found him more than once on the strawberry beds in the summer, poking his nose through the protecting nets and eating the fruit with evident relish.—E. W.

RIDGES ON DOWNLAND.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am sending you a photograph that I have had taken of one of the slopes of the Downs near Caesar's Camp at Folkestone. You will notice that the side is nothing but a succession of small ridges, and this formation is very noticeable all over this district and elsewhere on the South Downs. I have asked friends about it, and one has told me that it comes from sheep feeding on the side of the Downs for centuries, but this I can hardly believe. I should appreciate it if you could give me some information about it.—G.



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